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AMBASSADORS OF GOD

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THE THREE RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF OXFORD AND THEIR MOVEMENTS

AMBASSADORS OF GOD

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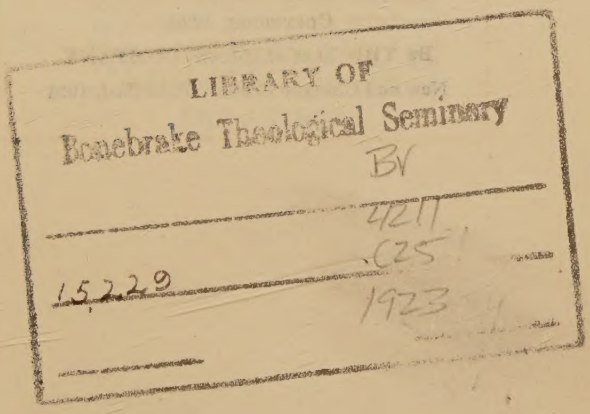
BY

S. PARKES CADMAN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TO

HENRY C. FOLGER, D.Litt.

WHOSE REVERENT SYMPATHY FOR
THE FORMS OF A TRUE WORSHIP
HAS ENRICHED THE PRAISE OF
THE SANCTUARY, THIS VOLUME
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR

PREFACE

The chapters of this book were originally prepared as lectures to be delivered upon the Shepard and Carew foundations at Bangor and Hartford Theological Seminaries. They have since been delivered at Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, New Jersey, and before several ministerial conferences. I am greatly indebted to the Rev. John L. Belford, D.D., for the loan of volumes upon preaching in the Roman Catholic Church, to the Rev. Oscar L. Joseph for his scholarly suggestions, and to the Rev. A. S. Morris, the Rev. Charles A. Ross, the Rev. David Loinaz, and Professor Edgar A. Hall for their valued help in preparing the manuscript for the press.

S. P. C.

Lent, 1920.

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CHAPTER I

THE SCRIPTURAL BASIS FOR PREACHING

But all things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God.

II Corinthians v: 18–20.

Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews xii: 1–2.

AMBASSADORS OF GOD

CHAPTER I

THE SCRIPTURAL BASIS FOR PREACHING

Varying values attached to preaching—Implications of the term ambassadors of God—The fundamental sanction of preaching—Hebrew prophets—The Bible and modern criticism—Main conceptions of the Prophets—Their influence upon civilization—The Psalmists—Their range and limitations—Permanent value of the Old Testament—Teaching of Jesus—The Kingdom of God—Christology of the New Testament—Apostolic development of doctrine.

Statements about preaching involve nearly everything under the sun and range from the warmest eulogy to censure of an equal temperature. The streams of praise and dispraise, stricture and defense seldom run dry; the last word seems never to have been said. Under these circumstances, I ask your forbearance during my discussion of an all important theme which has enlisted many able exponents. My only justification for adding to their superior contributions of advice and criticism is that I propose to confine myself as closely as possible to those practical evaluations of preaching which have been derived from my personal experiences as a preacher. It is fortunate for me that your attainments in theological knowledge permit me to take for granted much which otherwise would require explanation. As men predetermined and in training for the ministry of the Word, you do not have to wait upon but rather to weigh what I have to offer, accepting only that which you deem applicable to your personal necessities, and judging it in the light of the

learning which has illuminated the Church during the past few decades. Yet notwithstanding the benefits of that learning we have arrived at no finality in the numerous and excellent ideals of preaching hitherto presented. Broadly speaking, few people have the hardihood to deny that the Christian pulpit exerts a wide-spread and salutary influence upon the race, implanting virtuous character, and nourishing social fidelity and religious certitude. But it does not enjoy the very great advantage of universally accepted premises on which to build a scientific theory of preaching, and these have still to be sought in the tantalizing twilight of dogmatic preferences and conflicting precepts. The regenerative qualities ascribed to preaching by those authoritative men who esteem it as the chief agency for upraising and purifying the life of individuals and nations are disallowed by other prominent leaders. In the Roman Catholic, the Orthodox Greek, the Anglican and the Reformed Churches an affectionate reverence for preaching as the noblest human employment of thought and language is found side by side with its moderated approval or candid disparagement. From our viewpoint as sons of Puritanism, the evolution which produced the prophet and later the preacher was essentially a divine ordination; from the viewpoint of ultramontane ecclesiastics that evolution represented an emphatically different process, in which the priestly caste predominated. Many men and women of a secular complexion attribute preaching to purely natural causes and assign it a lower place in public usefulness than Scripture warrants or the Church can concede. All who discuss it are swayed by their varying temperaments and prepossessions; and their conclusions are marked by consequent disparities of conviction. You will further observe that prophetic preaching, to which you should constantly aspire, lives in the realm of imponderables, and endeavors to realize and set forth the abstract ideals of that realm. Throughout the ages prophet and preacher have striven to formulate and express their religious sentiments, but none has ever quite succeeded because the deep things of God

are unutterable. The apprehension of these facts, which precedes a sympathetic understanding of the whole matter, makes you less impatient with types of preaching remotest from your own, and impregnates your sermons with that breadth for which there is no adequate substitute.

What then are the implications of the illustrious title AMBASSADORS OF GOD bestowed upon your calling in the second Corinthian letter of St. Paul? How can those who are thus distinguished by one who stands forever foremost in the hierarchy he named, best represent the Creator to His creatures? What are the sanctions of Holy Writ, of Christian history; what the indefeasible obligations of the Church Catholic concerning the propagation of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God? These and kindred queries will have to be answered, if not now, in the immediate future, not only in their narrower but in their widest associations; in their bearing upon prevalent ideas, upon Protestant relations with the individual and the State, upon Christianity and its functions in the world. A recent complaint that later theology has been extensively occupied with providing a basis in Scripture and philosophy for opinions which have no real connection with either is somewhat reckless in its generalization. Nevertheless it is substantial enough to admonish you that the outstanding truths you have to proclaim are few, simple and experimental; a priceless consolation for preachers at a critical juncture when their calling shares the painful exigencies of a transitional period in which changes are rife and paradoxes so numerous that frequently they devour one another. Those truths and the governing conceptions of their diffusion are found in the Bible, to which historic continuity, logical consistency, present chaotic conditions and practical policy alike bid us appeal. But we must resort to its jurisdiction on real, not on conventional lines, and the appeal must be inspired by that passion for veracity which has covered the Book itself with an imperishable splendor. The time has come when injunctions about homiletics must not only be pious but free from casuistry. It is not sufficient to tell candidates for the minis-

try that they have to be genuine servants of God, regenerate in life and blameless of character. These qualifications are presupposed in every case, and their reiteration, while always vital, is by no means the only consideration involved. An unbiased and instructed pulpit conscience has to be enlisted to meet the ever-growing demand that Christian thinkers and preachers shall make a final choice between dogmatic prepossessions about the Bible and such an actual and critical knowledge of its organic teachings as will moralize preaching and strengthen its hold upon intelligent society.

In your response to this demand two extremes must be avoided, since both are counterfeits forged at the opposite ends of error. The first decries the religious value of the Bible and especially of the Old Testament, deeming its careful examination a waste of energy; the second idealizes Scripture at the expense of truth. Contemporary preaching is seriously embarrassed by these factional attitudes. Reaction to any objective, however stalwart and trustworthy, is liable to be singled out for unqualified condemnation by amateur thinkers who have not the historic spirit, or by emotional people who spurn the experiences on which wisdom thrives. It is possible, especially in preaching, to mistake an intellectual virtue for a vice. And though reaction is a synonym for fatuous obstinacy, it may also mean in your work a return to its true and lasting form. In applying this assertion to Old Testament literature I am persuaded that your mastery of Hebrew prophecy will increase your breadth of view and sobriety of discernment, add to the weight and influence of your preaching, and enable you more justly to appraise men and events. The ephemeral nature and lamentable thinness of some pulpit efforts will not afflict your audiences, provided you have the good sense to fall back upon the chosen oracles of Judaism and impart a degree of their vivid spirituality to what you have to say. In an atmosphere thick with the dust of controversy, that preacher best serves his age who scales the heights of ancient prophecy and from the elevation thus attained surveys the troubled warfare of life's lower levels. For the seers of old

laid emphasis upon social justice, upon peace, and upon the Kingdom of God, of which they not only had transcendental visions as a future glory but which they also conceived as that realization of equity, compassion and unselfishness which makes for man's well-being on earth. Ministers who ignore the prophetic witness of the Bible often plow the sands; precedence, precept, prescription, count for nothing while they are engrossed in transient affairs and contentious issues. They are victims of the speculations which they happen for the moment to admire, and heed all too eagerly those advocates, orthodox or heterodox, who act and speak as though they dispensed the shields which fell from heaven. The discerning student does not yield his obedience to these fading specters of the religious and intellectual realms, but to those approved souls of Israel's history whose illuminated testimonies are a summary of the holiest faith, and whose records are among the highest credentials of his calling.

The equipment you require is provided in part in the prophets, the psalmists, the givers of the law and the heralds of the first Dispensation. But if you wander at will, seeking for an armor of your own which you insist shall protect your personal peculiarities rather than Biblical principles, night will close in upon you before you have joined your forces to the fight. As I view the situation, you need not hesitate to reject radical speculations invented by spiritual Ishmaelites who would gleefully cut the painter and send the boat adrift.

Despite the revolutionary projects which agitate the Church, remain steadfast in your loyalty to the venerable verities of Israel which can never be deprived of their supreme significance. Beware of the excessive individualism which is the essence of heathenism, the parent of theories too darkly audacious to be trusted. The labyrinth you tread has but one clew: not the old nor the new, but the true as against the false. This truth the prophets habitually phrased as "the word of the Lord," and their reverence for it explains their preëminence. Upon it they depended; upon it you likewise must depend. It diminishes perplexities and dismisses fears; it conducts you

into the open spaces where the horizons lift, the magic casements open, and you gain those glimpses of the largeness of life, cosmic and elemental, the vision of which was vouchsafed aforetime to the seers of Israel. You may recall Plato's discourse upon the necessity of maintaining with a commensurate diligence what we believe to be absolute truth. He bespoke for that truth the "marvelous vigilance" which is the first impulse of a genuine preacher's mind. The conflicts it has waged with error point the moral of all human tales: that no matter what else changes the realities of righteousness are eternal. These realities have one of their most perfect embodiments in the earlier Scriptures, which emit the breath of God from nearly every page. What novelty they acquire is due to their reiteration through successive ages, and though your reproduction of their teaching may give it emphasis, it cannot give it originality. No interplay of ingenuity, however skillful, no protest of skepticism, however adroit, has displaced their centrality. They are not necessary because they are mandatory, but mandatory because they are necessary. The prophetic faith, which has a specific relation not to the Old Testament as a whole but to its highest and best ideas, is a religion which in its deepest essentials is closely akin to Christianity. Its benevolence is not more truly clement than its austerity; its inhibitions are barriers against irreparable disaster; its "goodly fellowship of the prophets" has struck the chords of that infinite harmony which, gathering resonance with the centuries, will yet blend earth's discords into a perfect peace. To these Scriptures, to their authors, to their pleadings and exhortations, you can safely render heart-felt allegiance. They will make you alert to every duty of your vocation, valiant in the strife which that duty often entails, and heedless of its apparently adverse consequences to yourself. Their light is like that of the torch: the more it is shaken the brighter it shines.

Having taken a definite stand in behalf of the study of these sacred oracles, whose antiquity is an indisputable evidence of the survival of the fittest, I hasten to say that your

veneration for them should be under certain restrictions. Rash counsels to regard the Old Testament arbitrarily, or to treat it in a negligible fashion, must not induce in you a reversion to the "prostrated emotionalism" of letter-worship. You are to hold fast its good, and yet define it well—

> "For fear divine philosophy
> Should push beyond the mark."

If the preacher is bound to repudiate the notion that the essentials of religion can be successfully propagated without reference to their experimental history, he is not less obligated to resist those adherents to the vain traditions of Bibliolatry, who were born and baptized in them and only relinquish them at death. He is not concerned with the personal merits of virtuous yet mistaken exponents of the Scriptures, but solely with what those Scriptures have to say, and he cannot set forth their vital truth until this has become a part of himself. Many estimable men gird against the scientific methods which have played havoc with their predilections, and dispelled the enervating glamour that too often enshrouds religious histories. Others who view these histories with a bemused eye dread disillusionment, and spend what strength they have in standing still. Haunted by the foreboding that at every emergency faith and morals are slipping into the abyss, some devout but dismayed spirits beat a hasty retreat into bygone days to find what they crave rather than what is actually there. From these and similar circles have arisen the false literalisms, strained analogies, and fantastic exegeses which are a reproach to the modern pulpit. And so long as Biblical research is not subject to the laws of evidence nor disinterested enough to care only for what is valid, such romancings will continue to weaken preaching with their allegorizing proclivities and lurid apocalyptics. In the end they will prove abortive, but in the interval they are mischievous. For it is at best a hazardous procedure to drive your hearers to the edge of unbelief in the hope that they will recoil to the center

of credulity. Yet this procedure is countenanced by those who first identify sacred truth with their opinions, and then declare that there is no alternative between the acceptance of their fallibilities and avowed unbelief: a dogmatic theory which has created needless friction between the pulpit and the public by its perversion of Scriptural teaching.[1] You are warned against this abuse of the Bible by the example of the Scribes and Pharisees whose bigotry defiled the religious heritage of Israel. When Jesus appeared their hard and exclusive literalism had already done its work, rendering them insensible to the spirit within the letter, for, to quote His own words, had they believed Moses and the prophets they would have received Him. But with them rites and ceremonies displaced prophecy, and they regarded the meticulous observance of codes as more imperative than inward purity or sacrificial obedience. Their insistence upon externalism wrecked Judaism's mission to mankind and ended in a tragedy which brought them into sinister prominence. Their recreancy indicates that it is not a trifling thing to misread the accounts of God's dealings with His children, nor solely a matter of your own persuasion, important though that may be, as to what course the minister shall pursue in his interpretations of Holy Writ. There is a normal standard in preaching which enlightened men are pledged to restore where it is in abeyance, and always and everywhere to revere. Measured by it your work is neither fugitive nor individual, but belongs to a definite institution producing definite results, and surviving disabilities and misapprehensions because "the integration keeps pace with the differentiation," and the entire process is subordinated to the Divine purpose.

Further, the false charge that a scholarly examination of the earlier Scriptures, in order to ascertain their spiritual and moral values, synchronizes with the derogation of their revelatory character is repeated by groups that agree about little

[1] Cf. Professor Kemper Fullerton: *Prophecy and Authority* for a scholarly discussion of the types of Biblical interpretation current in the Church.

else except the resolution to fasten upon the theology and the preaching of the Church obsolete forms which her vitality resents. When prejudices are at stake, fact and reason are promptly discounted, and fulminations against the assured results of Biblical research provoke the aspersions cast upon the intellectual integrity of the pulpit. You are not to be diverted by these attacks from tracing out your homiletical knowledge to its sources, or from making independent inquiry the touchstone of your Biblical scholarship. The Christian student must have contact with the living implications of his subject in order that he may apply them to the forces that move his own time. His theological education is beneficial in proportion as it enlarges and clarifies his preaching mind, and preserves for its use precious material which might otherwise have remained unavailable. There is a becoming skepticism that subserves belief by purging it of those legends formerly inserted in its creedal statements to supply the defects of knowledge or to make them palatable to current tastes. That skepticism, so far from minifying the sacredness of Old Testament revelation, magnifies it and rids its interpretation of the impedimenta which need no longer encumber preaching. A limitless field for the excursions of the licensed imagination has been opened up by the Old Testament scholarship of the last hundred years. The weakening habit of fanciful comment and the evasion of disagreeable realities have been checked, but not eradicated. The Hebrew Scriptures participate in the liberation derived from the scientific learning which has transferred mankind to that universe wherein the preacher has to sustain faith and the humanities. No intelligent person dreams to-day that the point of view of science can be suppressed, neither should any one suppose, as some scientists do, that the spirit of religion cannot be imbibed to advantage. Applying this to cosmogony alone, who would now, asks Dr. Martineau, in behalf of piety return to the miniature cosmos in which the first elements of religious culture were revealed, or dare to say that in unveiling to us the amazing creation we know, scientists have blasphemed its Maker?

Not only preaching but all that lies behind its edification is involved here. The Bible has driven through avowed antagonisms more easily than it has thrown off the burdens heaped upon it by mistaken friendships. Under the fire of its foes it has proved its invulnerability; under the exposition of its erring devotees it has often been made a stumbling block to sincere lovers of God. Its more disciplined service has been rendered possible by the demand for its elucidation, created by the necessities of an ever-expanding and interrogating world. He, then, is the visioned preacher who, when his fragile schemes are wrecked, sees emergent therefrom, in the light cast by faith's historic achievements, those invincible purposes which shame his terror. He will not be submerged in dismal qualms and regrets, but will be buoyed up by his liberal acquaintance with the history of the Bible and its heroes. Every kind of knowledge as it comes to his spirit falls like fuel on its altar fires, and gives a higher leap to their flame. It is his prerogative to hail the dawn in his own sky—the new day which is itself the offspring of the former time—and to scrutinize with thankful care the perpetuity of saving truth in all ages alike. Whether in life or in death, in this world or the next, he will pursue, he will overtake, he will divide the spoil, conscious that while on pilgrimage "weeping may tarry for the night, joy cometh in the morning." Be of good cheer: for successive eras find a harmonious correspondence; errors in preaching automatically correct themselves, and differences in belief, or retrogressions here and there, have not prevented its messengers from bringing good tidings from afar and publishing the peace of God. If some brethren display inordinate propensities for tradition or for modernism as such, and others luxuriate in esoteric passages and apocalyptic thunderings, apply to them the principle of charitable judgment which Spinoza laid down in a confession at once philosophical and religious. Study your opponents, said he, the more intently that you may discern the sources of their influence and the needs they endeavor to satisfy,—a habit as wise in theory as it is exceptional in practice.

II

The Hebrew Scriptures are the only specimens of historical literature the ancient East has bequeathed to civilization. That in remote antiquity other Oriental nations possessed such literatures is practically certain, but of them nothing remains; and despite the innumerable Egyptian, Assyrian and Babylonian inscriptions and other writings which have been deciphered in recent years, there is no people contemporaneous with the Israelites whose records rise to the dignity of history. The light and heat of relevant and irrelevant inquiries have beaten upon the law, annals, ritual and prophecy of the Old Testament. A minute investigation has permitted nothing to escape it; and its erudition and ingenuity constitute it one of the capital achievements of modern scholarship. Far be it from me to pronounce upon the value of the results, since I have nothing worth while to offer towards the solution of the problems of the integrity and authenticity of these earlier Scriptures as they are technically construed. Such savants as Ewald, Kuenen, Wellhausen, Budde, Delitzsch, De Wette, A. B. Davidson, Robertson Smith, George Adam Smith, Cheyne, Driver, W. T. Davison, Arthur S. Peake, Francis Brown and Robert W. Rogers, to mention no others, have already cleared the way for our purely practical aims. These are facilitated by a due but not slavish deference to the conclusions reached by a critical interpretation which honors facts, respects evidence, confirms the philosophy of a unified and symmetrical unfolding to man of the Divine Will, and contributes to the moral and religious elevation of the race. The process has not been without waste, which is, however, incidental, and need not interfere with your survey of those great backgrounds of Holy Scripture which stretch from the germinal spiritualities of a chosen nation to their consummation in Jesus as the Christ.

The most important interest of all is, to quote Principal Sir George Adam Smith, "the belief of Israel and of the Christian Church that embedded in and reflected by the Old Testament

is a genuine revelation from God,'' [2] which is not only left unimpaired, but actually confirmed by the historical and critical treatment that has aroused the irreconcilable opposition of many zealous pulpiteers. In their repudiation of methods that appear to them disintegrating and destructive, they have forgotten how small a portion of the Old Testament has really been affected; and those doubting ones who have abandoned entire provinces of its history will do well to reflect that not a few of the noblest motives and most fruitful themes of Christian preaching are found there. There is nothing extraordinary in this because the two religions of the Bible are so interlocked that neither can be fully understood apart from the other. When, therefore, a well known theological lecturer in Cambridge University, England, tells us that the syllabus he requires of students exacts only a knowledge of the creeds in relation to the growth of doctrine in the first five centuries of the Christian era, one can scarcely wonder that the sacred science should be discredited or candidates for the ministry be few.[3] For as a matter of fact, to those who regard the leading ideas of the Old Testament as a fixed quantity, or as no more than a mere preface to the New Testament, the latter is a sealed book. Each Dispensation of the Scriptures has traits peculiar to itself and essentials far stronger than their respective affinities; but the bed-rock of both is a Divine Revelation of the unity and the holiness of God which also prescribes those laws of human life that correspond with the Eternal Will. External conformity to ritual and creed is subordinated to righteousness in word and deed as the integral part of both Testaments: a fundamental position which the Hebrew prophet and the Christian preacher have pertinaciously maintained.

The more you ponder the ineluctable principles of the Old Testament, the more you perceive in them that vital force which, like the bush of Moses, burns but is not consumed. The

[2] *Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament*, Lecture IV, "The Proof of a Divine Revelation in the Old Testament."

[3] See *The Spectator*, London, June 11th, 1919.

dissemination of Sinaitic doctrine by its racial inheritors and through Christianity and Mohammedanism has deeply affected the material, social and intellectual life of mankind. Yet, as Luzzatto, Geiger, Holdheim, Samuel Hirsch, Einhorn, Isaac M. Wise, Claude G. Montefiore, Dr. Schechter, and notably Dr. Kohler have demonstrated, this dissemination could not have occurred had not their Faith held intrinsically those elements of variation and development, which are sources of reverence and incentive to every student of Holy Writ. If it had been cast within static forms, it would long since have been shattered by the ordeals it has undergone and the persecutions it has endured. Its capacity for expansion and readjustment has triumphed over countless adversities and renewed its virility at every crucial stage.

The constructive process which prepared the way for the advent of Christ affords you a stimulating survey. In its vast hinterland, rich with homiletical treasures, are the Semitic scenes of patriarchal wanderings, of the conquest of Canaan, of the events of the pre-monarchical period. Ever and anon, the vestiges of primeval barbarism crop out and present those phenomena which have baffled orthodoxy because they cannot be vindicated without the sacrifice of ethical values. They belong to a phase of the ageless worship of man which is often as immoral or rather non-moral as it is pre-theological. A ceremonialism which occasionally reflected the crudest primitivism, and ended in the regulation of outward behavior, was the sedulous practice of the nation. But its repellent features should not deter you from following the gradual ascent of Israel's religion up from the lowlands until it reaches its summit in the grandeur of prophetic teaching. When the seers appeared Israel sloughed off corruptive accretions and became the priest and servant of Jehovah. Even legalism, to which the Psalter is an immortal lyrical tribute, seldom attained the serener altitudes of the prophets, in whom you will find, and in them alone, the living link between the two Dispensations. They brought their countrymen out of the Egypt of polluted and idolatrous cultisms into the Prom-

ised Land of a monotheistic religion held in justice and right living. Under their guidance an entirely new conception of Deity was evolved, which differentiated Him as sharply from primeval gods as from Chemosh of the Moabites. By virtue of the ethical attributes which the prophets superimposed upon the popular idea of Jehovah as physical might, He became for Israel, and ultimately for mankind, the moral Sovereign of the universe. Thus arose that doctrine of Deity which is the noblest contribution of Hebraism to the world. With its gradual spread Israel entered upon a historic religious culture culminating in the Monotheism which unified and consecrated creation under the sway of the everlasting God.

This ideal, which has transformed the world, establishing its justice and mercy, was not the outcome of metaphysical speculation, but the resultant of the vision of history as a moral order.[4] The prophets anticipated Jesus by conceiving of God as Righteousness; a conception that has moralized all lawful conceptions of His love, although the difference is largely verbal, for that which the prophets found in righteousness the apostles found in love. "I will seek that which was lost, and will bring back that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick," are the words of God uttered through one who, as priest and seer, combined in himself the chief offices of both Dispensations.[5] Nowhere do the Old Testament prophets portray men as ignorant of the existence of God, nor do they, like other seekers after Him, tentatively approach the mystery of His Being through the indirect methods of natural theology. They lived and moved in His very presence, which was for them the primal fact of consciousness. Their habit of reasoning ascribed to Him the origin of every human good and every avenue of human knowledge. They drew down from their thought of God upon the world: they did not rise from the world upward to their thought of God. Their contempla-

[4] George F. Moore: *History of Religions;* Vol. II, p. 29.
[5] Ezekiel xxxiv: 16.

tion of Providence and the life of man was never of the nature of a search after God Whom they did not know, but always of the nature of a recognition of God whom they knew.[6] In repeated religious crises, when the ordinary interpretation of standard doctrines had failed, the prophets brought back the theocratic kingdom not to expostulations and to arguments but to Jehovah. His word in their mouths was a veritable declaration of His Will at a particular juncture. It was neither an inference nor a deduction from previous revelation, but an original expression of the character and purpose of the Living God who made Himself regnant in the prophet's soul and vocal in his utterance.[7] The faculties of the earthly agent were controlled by a heavenly power, which involved no renunciation of personality, but raised all its gifts to an extraordinary susceptibility, by which self-questioning and fear were crowded out, and the transformed being of the prophet became the vehicle of divine communication. It may be said in parenthesis that the New Testament Trinitarianism, which of course is not Tritheism, owes much to the stabilizing influence of the teaching of the Old Testament wherein God is set forth as Just, Righteous, Loving, Omnipresent; and emphasizes His basic Oneness. Upon this teaching the Jew still concentrates, and out of it the Christian believer in the Risen Christ draws the even greater doctrine of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

In a sacred literature extending over at least seven hundred years, the authorship of which embraced so many different personalities and points of view, you are sure to find unsystematized and inconsistent material. Prophets and priests, saints and sages, simple souls and skeptical thinkers, dreamers and doers, historians who wrote for a purpose or to state the facts, came from every walk of life, some with the most spiritual ideas and purposes, others with lower thoughts and aims. In studying them you have to fix on the high central mind,

[6] A. B. Davidson: Article on *God* in Hasting's *Dictionary of the Bible;* Vol. II, p. 196.

[7] W. Robertson Smith: *The Prophets of Israel,* p. 9.

averse to compromise, which characterized the princes of prophecy who made war upon sacerdotal excess, ossified ritualism, non-social practice, heathen idolatry, and the worst forms of ignorance which can sap a nation's strength: the species fed by flattering superstition and immersed in racial pride. Their prophecy was not a mechanical utterance but the symphonic chorus of a comprehensive group of oracles whose gifts blended in an accordant whole, and whose chief theme was righteousness. How common is the observation that man's profounder religious experiences are beyond the compass of his speech. Yet in the prophets, ethical and spiritual sublimities were creatively conceived and expressed with majestic fullness and a proportion which no preponderant feature was allowed to mar. Their classic passages have in them the substance of a thousand homilies. They strike without dissonance the dual notes of limitation and of illimitableness. This is one of the rarest accomplishments of sacred discourse, since it finds entrance for the loftiest truths in lowliest forms. To speak with the utmost intimacy and yet without a trace of irreverence of things deemed unutterable is indeed a spiritual art. Each prophet saw the identical realities of righteousness from his own standpoint, and communicated them in his own manner, but none forgot either the unity of heaven and earth or the infinitudes that lie between them. Their closeness to Jehovah did not conceal from them the governing principle of religious inquiry, that His thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are His ways our ways. Thus these preachers of righteousness were both near and distant, humane and holy, and voiced their divinest precepts in simple and universal forms. The aloofness that separates the idealistic from the practical or the materialized mind and divided Greek and Roman society into antagonistic groups, was absent from their attitude. They were not so situated that they won no respect for their message while those to whom it was addressed reaped no benefit. Unlike the priesthoods of Egypt and Chaldea, they did not entrench themselves within a caste, nor reserve their instructions for esoteric circles, nor cultivate a dreamy

romanticism. On the contrary, they were openly identified with the rulers and the people of Israel, and placed before them what have been called the "forced options" of life, which always crowd its stage, refuse to be dismissed and are none too patient with the hardened heart. Power was theirs even in the darkest eras, not the customary kind, but that procreant urge which enabled them to surmount obstacles, hurl wickedness from its seat and attain an unequaled ethical supremacy. Their predictions were the invariable prelude to momentous resolution and still more momentous action. They melted congealed private and public sentiment, and poured it into new molds of unified purpose, stamping it afresh with spiritual significance.

In the days of Israel's defeat and ruin they were the ministers of her consolation, whose exquisitely tender and encouraging words have sustained many nations. Yet even after exile and dismemberment had befallen the chosen people, the prophets became iconoclastic, inveighed against the wickedness which had wrought the disaster, and assailed national greed, jealousy and idolatry as fiercely as they did the predatory force of the foe. Here they show the preacher that, hard as it is to be a saint, it is harder yet to correct and chasten a flagrantly wayward epoch, and to overthrow its ruling ideas. When the modern pulpit can make a guilty commonwealth understand that it has reached a terminus where its false gods are no more and its cherished traditions worthless, we shall better apprehend the strength of these great magistrates of God who were the fathers of our calling. Their sympathetic and militant tempers were alike reactions from the times in which they lived, and bring them before us as concretely and vividly as Shakespeare ushers in the world of his dramas. Ponder the fact that the prophets gained their eminence by staying in their own place, and were made serviceable by what they had to say to society and not by its adventitious dignities. It is a truism to remark that they were divinely inspired men, but how did that inspiration work, and upon what lines? The answer is, they were intent on righteousness, not only upon

its adorable perfection in Deity, but its actual manifestation in individuals and in the State. Translating it with marvelous skill out of the abstract into the concrete, they brought its theories to the tests of actual life, and showed them to be consonant with its experience and necessary to its good. Believing as they did that Israel enjoyed a special priesthood in order that God might make known through it His redemptive purposes for mankind, they strove to protect the national integrity by waging relentless war on the Baalim which abounded everywhere. You cannot read them without perceiving that a supreme operation was in progress which established the divine original of justice for their own and for after ages. Their exposition of some attributes of the Supreme Being is unsurpassed even in the New Testament, and their constructive vision of the religious growth of mankind from its primitive beginnings to its completion in the universal governance of the coming Deliverer is epical in its descriptions and determination. The raw material of myth and legend and the world-shaping movements of the three great empires that encircled Israel—Assyria, Babylonia and Persia,—were assimilated for the elaboration of ethical teaching. This was their sublimely monotonous plea, and those who carefully note their fidelity to its exactions will best understand the motive of the prophet's vocation and the reason for its penetration into the farthest recesses of life and conduct. A summary of the ethic of Israel is found in the familiar text of Micah: "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God."[8] Such teaching, which could be duplicated, if not surpassed, by other Old Testament prophets, is the result of religious maturity annealed in the furnace of experience and expanded by divine energy. While, as we have seen, the prophets spread abroad ideals of the Creator and of the creature, which have been the aspirations of the pure in heart, they also set over against the triumphant reign of righteousness an irrevocable divorce of reprobate men and

[8] Micah vi: 8.

nations from that righteousness which left these outcasts in darkness and despair. Their sense of sin was deep and vivid; they saw it not simply as an outward blemish of behavior but as that principle of evil within humanity which destroys the very springs of its existence. They knew the unremitting malignancy of the mystery of iniquity, and felt the need of an incessant struggle against its power.

Although these elect spirits who pierced the sensory vail were sometimes overwhelmed by the infinite vistas beyond, they were never purveyors of bewildering mysticisms, nor inflated thaumaturgists reveling in wild and distorted notions of the invisible. Even the apocalyptic writings of the Old Testament, on which so many modern homilists are wrecked, were as a rule definitely related to contemporary circumstances. Where their splendors are somewhat dusky, as in Ezekiel, they are still luminous and interspersed with calm recitals and calculated appeals. The eternities brood over much that they utter, and excite the awed expectation that something hidden from all vision draws near. Yet they make it plain that nothing can appear which is not for the perpetuity of the Kingdom of God.

Historically considered, the Old Testament was the earliest earthly homeland of the soul of Jesus, from which He derived some truths He taught, and whose history He regarded as preparatory to His Advent. He interpreted its laws as expressions of the righteousness He came to fulfill; its language was upon His lips from the sojourn at Nazareth to the ascent of the Cross; and He perpetuated its prophetic spirit and message in the Church He founded.[9] Yet neither His use of the Hebrew Scriptures nor that of the Apostles silences the critical questions which have signalized their modern treatment. The hard and fast lines that were afterwards drawn around them by Jewish and Christian theologians were not authorized by the example of our Lord nor of His earliest followers. He did not hesitate to set aside the temporary pro-

[9] Cf. Principal Sir George Adam Smith: *Modern Criticism and The Preaching of the Old Testament*, p. 2.

visions of the Old Testament nor to show a decided preference for its essential values. The writers of the New Testament quoted from the Greek version of the Hebrew Scriptures, a version containing a number of books not found in the Hebrew Canon, and also varying in material ways from the received text. They manifested indifference to the exact words of the citations, and occasionally different passages were mingled together. Nevertheless, for our Lord and for His Apostles these books were the Bible of their education and ministry, and it has been pertinently observed that what was indispensable to the Author of our Redemption must always be indispensable to us.

The prophetic vocation, although distinctive in Old Testament literature, was not peculiar to it. The Stoics and other philosophers frequented the places of concourse in Greek and Roman cities where they expatiated upon their systems with their usual cynical diatribes. In the farther East the missionaries of Buddhism carried its doctrines beyond the frontiers of India, and centuries later the disciples of Islam supplemented their use of the sword in propaganda with truculent and picturesque speech. Preaching as thus understood has been eloquent in other tongues and for other creeds than those of the Bible. Nevertheless, the Hebrew prophets invested the spoken word with such transcendent significance that even the Roman Empire felt its benefits, and from their ampler watersheds flowed the healing rivers which came to their floodtide in the New Testament. Their recognition of God in the realm of human affairs where He has been least remembered and His punishments have consequently been the greater, bore fruit in St. Chrysostom's use of their writings to scourge the vices and comfort the sorrows of the inhabitants of Antioch. From St. Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* to Dante's *De Monarchia* and Wycliffe's *De Dominio Divino,* treatises upon righteousness in civil government and political ideals have been largely originated by prophetic teaching. When the means of understanding the Hebrew text had been recovered, by its aid Savonarola became the prophet of the civic re-

generation of Florence. Although the German Reformers were too entranced with the doctrine of Justification by Faith to do justice to the social teaching of the Old Testament, it is to Luther that we owe one of the choicest expositions of that teaching. The imperial intellect of Calvin made the ancient prophets audible to the Protestant world, and their social and political influence upon Northern Europe and America can be traced to the massive erudition and admirable exegetical methods which his commentaries display. The social conscience, which to-day views the Christ not only as the Eternal Son of God, the Propitiation for sin, the Judge of quick and dead, but also as the Man Who "in the midst of the people fought a fight in behalf of all the people which is never to be forgotten," has been quickened and enlightened by the prophets. Who that has caught but a glimpse of their great souls can look with indifference upon the rise of the city and all the evils of its growth, or upon the brutalities of the industrial order? They watched the transformation of Hebrew society from an agricultural to a commercial state, and safeguarded this development by inculcating the principles of an equal and speedy justice, freedom for the enslaved, and the cleansing of social relationships. Would to God that the Church of Christ had always been as jealous of His royalties in mankind! Then would all her children have been taught of the Lord, and great would have been their peace.

The prophets were eminent public characters; the psalmists whom we have but barely mentioned preferred to dwell alone. "Hide thy life," said Epicurus, and the practice of such privacy by the authors of the Psalter exemplifies the wisdom of the maxim. That they escaped the notice of the annalists was not the least of the advantages they owed to their seclusion, wherein they cultivated the things of the spirit which, though they disturb men, yet when they are reverenced, yield a lively and a constant joy. To them the psalmists gave unique and unequaled setting in lyric poetry which reaches the heights even of the unrivaled religious imagination of the Hebrew. It was the fixity of the law of the covenant of Judaism, which

is the surest sign of its sanctity, that formed the nucleus of its hymns. Neither the continuity which is the essence of history, nor the chronologies which connect its happenings were the bonds of the Psalter. Its composers had no single definite background, nor were they the servants of doctrinal formulas. The religious ideals of Israel were their indissoluble tie, albeit their expressions of those ideals were variously applied at separated intervals and to different events. Since the Psalter was not homogeneous in authorship, nor the product of a single age, nor the compilation of an anthology beneath unity of circumstance and aim, its leading trait is, as might be expected, a manifold diversity which ranges from meditation, petition and adjuration to anthems of praise and worship, invocations to peace and war, ascriptions to righteousness and hallelujahs of thanksgiving. The plaints of perplexed thinkers, the sorrows of hunted fugitives, the distresses of physical sufferers are mingled with epic narrations and triumphant pæans. The period they cover extends from the age of David to that of the Maccabees, a prolonged interval during which they were the songs of private devotion and later "a collection of collections" and also "the Hymnal of the second Temple."

The truths these rhapsodists sang did not follow the usual order of development from a crudely national to an enlightened faith. They were immediately visualized and set forth with the utmost passion of inspiration and the intensest human sympathy: a combination of qualities that leaves emotion in the heart and music in the memory. Earthly matters seemed trivial to the psalmists when compared with the Divine drama as a whole. Expositors who do not realize this timelessness have read into their symbolisms secular references to particular events in the history of Israel, but there is nothing to support such implications beyond the fact that the destruction of Jerusalem and the Babylonian Captivity give them a slender foundation. Moreover, a poetical literature which contains the earliest and the latest growths of Hebraism should be received by the preacher on its own terms.

The zeal for retribution, the exhortations to revenge, the fervid hate of Israel's foes, found in the imprecatory psalms, are tokens of the ruthless war waged upon surrounding and uncovenanted nations. The defiance and wholesale destruction of their enemies were viewed by the Hebrews as acts of loyalty to the Theocracy. It is needless to say that such sentiments are foreign to the ethic of the prophets and of the New Testament, nor is there any possible coördination between these breathings of threatening and slaughter and the unutterable longing for truth, purity and righteousness found elsewhere in the Psalter. Deal with the Psalter after the fashion indicated by Principal W. T. Davison in his two volumes, *The Praises of Israel,* and it will become for you a criterion of preaching ability, in which the piety of the saint, the knowledge of the scholar and the breadth of the humanist are drawn upon. Thus to know and love the psalms is indeed,

"Part of life's unalterable good."

Their authors were not by intention reasoners and teachers but fellow-seekers after God. To enter into His presence and to awake in His likeness were their ardent desires, and, though they sometimes clung with regrettable persistency to the lessons of their older experience, they never failed to emphasize afresh the nature and the counsels of the beneficent God, as these became more real to their apprehension. The consciousness of their spiritual comradeship has endeared them to Hebrew and Gentile alike, and Christians delight and live in the Psalter as in no other book of the Old Testament. Judged by equitable standards, the piety of its writers is of the highest character. They portray the Hebrew religion as a Faith without an equal in the pre-Christian world. Even in the New Testament the psalms have no counterpart. They dwell in the very heart of Israel's revelation, with a beauty and a pathos all their own, as the largest and most perfect expression in praise of the divine law of obedience, and mirror with the utmost fidelity every alternation of

human experience in the quest for God. Enraptured by His nearness, but dreading His reproof, the Psalmists still believed that notwithstanding the delusions in which man has wandered, the sins and follies he has committed, he will yet find recompense for his pains and pardon for his transgressions in the mercy which endureth forever.

In conclusion, it is not easy coldly to compute the sum of those positive achievements which can be attributed to the Prophets and the Psalmists. It suffices to say that of the three most opulent endowments which the pre-Christian ages bequeathed to the race, that of the prophets and psalmists alone has been infinitely more elevating than those of Greek culture and Roman law. This statement will perhaps find a readier credence now than it would have received before the late war came upon Christendom like a beast out of the wood. We were but recently accustomed to speak with bated breath of the processes that develop the intellectual faculities alone, organize man's knowledge for material conquests, and tighten his grip upon the physical resources of the earth. I am not so sure that we are quite as obsequious toward these processes as we were. True, their gains are very real, yet what are they, necessary as they appear to be; and what are the even more valuable triumphs of the æsthetic and literary imagination, when compared with the moral and spiritual ascendencies of Hebrew prophecy? These stand out in bold relief against our somber skies to admonish us that the truths inscribed on the pages of revelation remain forever the same, and will brook no rebellion. There was little that the prophets did not array beneath their banner, but they gave precedence to those primal truths, and left the rest to take their place, as they could well afford to do, under the governance of the Supreme Righteousness. Preach them unceasingly, in season and out of season. For you do not have to be versed in the minutiae of criticism to combine the acceptance of the main results of the modern view of the Old Testament writings, even in its advanced form, with a firm belief in the reality of their supernatural revelation. The controversy is

brought to a definite issue, not in the region of purely literary questions, where debates proceed upon the age, style, internal traits and historical credence of single books, but in the rise and fall of kingdoms and empires, in the theater of racial progress, in the steady growth on earth of the Kingdom of God.[10] Nor should you permit the attractions of science, philosophy, art, or literature to seduce you from your legitimate mission as a preacher of Old Testament righteousness. Nature has still to surrender to science a vast arcana; philosophy must continue to broaden its contemplations while knowledge increases; and literature has not yet all time and all existence at its disposal. But God has had His workmen from the first, who built His Kingdom upon immovable foundations. Its several stages show its cohesion, each stage being a vital product of the preceding one, and their entirety constitutes an organic whole. No one stage needs a justification different from that of all, since what justifies the Kingdom's actuality justifies its successive phases of self-realization, from the prophetic messages of Hebraism to the Messianic Ideal incarnated in Jesus. Nothing is negligible in a Divine evolution for which past, present and future are an eternal Now, and upon which the salvation of mankind depends. Be alert to the entire volume of the ancient Scriptures of Israel; for though they are often sketched in merest outlines, they are lines of fire. Patriarchs in the wilderness, soldiers on the battlefield, kings in their high or low estate, statesmen who were the nation's hope, poets who were its pride, and traitors who were its shame; saints who could be hideous sinners, and sinners who were redeemed to sainthood; the innocent child, the godly father, the prayerful mother, the sturdy youth, the boasting giant, the righteous man, the lying prophet, the martyred patriot; the solitary hero, who, like those of classic fable, overcame singlehanded; the wizard, the trafficker, the wise man

[10] Cf. Professor A. S. Peake: *The Bible, Its Origin, Its Significance and Its Abiding Worth,* for a lucid and balanced discussion of the subject.

and the fool — what a portrait gallery! Even Schleiermacher, great preacher though he was, could not turn from the Old Testament without loss. "One cannot but see," said Dr. John Ker, "that his style suffered from this neglect." Become acquainted therefore with the ethical impetuosity of Hosea; the wisdom of the statesman-prophet in Isaiah; the sublime visions of the anonymous seer of the Exile; the "burden of the Lord" laid upon Jeremiah. From such intimacy what may your preaching not gain in conciseness, concreteness, reasoned conviction, the profounder meaning of ordinary circumstances, the real nature of current history?

III

Our Lord's preaching began without a completely formulated system of either ethical or religious doctrine. He did not propose to satisfy all the cravings of man's curiosity concerning the spiritual problems of this life or of the hereafter. He gave no definition of God, but He brought Him into the life of man in a final and authoritative way and with a fullness of grace and truth that embraced every vital interest and suffused religious experience with a superhuman glow. His unique Personality gave that authority to His words which caused His hearers to exclaim "Never man so spake!" The gist of His teaching dealt with the Kingdom of Heaven as coextensive with the peoples of earth: a kingdom purposed from the first, existing potentially in the history of the Hebrew race, and culminating in Himself. The nature of this kingdom, the principles that govern it, the obligations resting upon its members, and the Being and functions of its King, were the themes of His earlier ministry. The chief elements of His message were inherited from the Hebrew seers, and carry with them the continuity which He declared could not be severed. His references to the Old Testament Scriptures were sufficiently inclusive to summarize their spiritual content, and, although He seldom quoted them verbatim, by citation from them, by allusion, parable, sanction, and occasional rejection,

He became their arbitrator. The undertone of His utterances, as well as His positive statements, affirmed the fact that His Mission and the Kingdom were identical: the uninterrupted development of one divine order to which all history and experience were subsidiary.

Viewed in its broader aspects this primal reality has been served by Hebrew and Christian alike. The Theocracy once objective to the Jew, who conceived of Israel as an elect priesthood ordained of Jehovah to become the premier people of a world dominion, eventually took another form, enforced upon it by the repeated depravities of the nation and an increasing realization of the holiness of God. Yet if the hour of Israel's reign was postponed, and the conception of its nature largely modified, to the devout Jew, Jehovah was still the monarch of mankind Who would bring every earthly blessing in His train. But even this prospect faded, and at last the disillusioned gaze of the ancient seers was fixed, not upon the faithless people nor upon its loyal remnant, but upon the solitary "Suffering Servant," "the Messiah," Who by His heroic sacrifice was to unite Israel beneath a federal sway. It was left to the imagination of the poet-prophets to clothe this ideal sovereignty with every resplendent circumstance, and to depict in glowing colors the advent of a Being who would subdue all his enemies and inaugurate the divine commonwealth of righteousness and peace.

This preliminary development, preparatory for Jesus, regulated His use of the Hebrew Scriptures and awakened in Him the Messianic consciousness which shaped and permeated His teaching. It consisted of "the distilled essence of the Old Testament," which, however, He revolutionized, giving it an entirely new direction and fulfilment in Himself. Upon His self-realization the Christianity you preach depends, and your belief in His absoluteness is determinative of your ministry. Yet if you cannot adequately understand the mystery of your own nature, how can you hope to apprehend that of your Divine Lord? Its appeal is to history and to psychology; speculation, as such, takes you but a little way, and it is, there-

fore, the highest wisdom to admit that the Being of Jesus is the secret of God and of His self-manifestation to man. But you do not have to revere it unintelligently at an awe-stricken distance. Ponder its revelation in the life Jesus lived and the Gospel He preached, and you will perceive that what had been for the Hebrew a Messianic aspiration became in Him the ever present consciousness of His vital Oneness with the Father.

The dull, stagnant, blighting ecclesiasticism in which the religion of Israel languished during our Lord's earthly ministry afforded no suitable environment for any servant of God. The dissertations of Scribes and Pharisees, who usurped the seat of Moses and hedged about the law with traditions that obscured its meaning and obstructed its operation, were entirely antagonistic to the mission and message of Jesus. Yet there were also protagonists of the Messianic hope who were not fettered by the lifeless formalism of that day: vigilant and prayerful souls who, though few in number, clung to the purer ideals of their ancestors, and waited for the consolation of Israel. Our Lord went beyond both these groups and heralded the Kingdom for what it was, and, as we have seen, had always been, a present, living, growing reality. He showed that the same fundamental principles underlay and created all changing phenomena, which were adapted to the particular stage of evolution in which they occurred. Now that the fullness of the time had come, it was not by specific Mosaic legislation, still less by the erroneous and acrid teachings of its latest commentators, but by the ethical and spiritual truths, which from the beginning had found their amplest expression in the prophets, that the Kingdom would be brought in and prove victorious. Injunction, code and ordinance were honored by being absorbed in its great law of love to God and one's neighbor. The realization of its essential character and aims was in Himself; its fulfillment belonged to His future. For this fulfillment He instructed His disciples to pray, and to believe that their prayers would be answered when all men should know and do the Father's

will. Crowns and thrones were not abolished: they were etherealized into symbols of the reward of the saint and the martyr. They reigned in His kingdom who best served truth and the brotherhood, and He became its King because He alone exalted His divine ideal by a divine sacrifice. These interpretations rest, first, in what He was, and again, upon what He taught. They unify both Dispensations of Holy Writ so that each yields everything implied in its Divine intention. Jesus, in that He came both to be and to do the Highest Will, is the Light of all Scripture and the Saviour of the race.

The inevitable result of this teaching was a radical sifting of the human family. National boundaries and religious castes, which had shut out infinitely more than they had ever enclosed, were swept away. Barriers fell on every side, and for the first time in the spiritual evolution of man the way was cleared for a universal Faith and fraternity, which were the consequences of the doctrine of God's Fatherhood and the essentials of Christ's regenerative program. He began His mission by placing an equal value on all souls, and by simplifying the distinctions which had separated them. The good, the merciful, the pure in heart, the lowly and the believing were the aristocracies of His Kingdom.

The path which He trod from Nazareth into His public ministry can be clearly traced. He was a rabbi who gathered around Him a few disciples of His own locality and social condition, to whom He conveyed the truths they could assimilate. He was an evangelist who itinerated among the shepherdless multitudes, healing their bodies and souls. He was also the prophet who proclaimed the purposes of Heaven in terms that indicated His perfect intimacy with the Father and His perfect obedience to the Father's will. But these characteristics do not account for Jesus as He lives in Christian history and experience, nor explain the unparalleled sway of His Person and His Gospel.

At this juncture you have to guard against the misconception of values which easily besets Christian thinking and is

injurious to Christian preaching. In the first place, the religion of Jesus has been periodically entangled with Jewish Messianism. From the time of the writing of the Thessalonian Epistles until now there have been earnest and devoted believers who confidently expected the return of Christ to earth, to be confirmed in His Messiahship by supernatural portents. Perhaps the expectation was not devoid of a semblance of reason in the Apostolic age; but after two thousand years of Christian history, and the spread of Christian truth and civilization, it would seem that Eternal Wisdom has refused to honor the claims of pre-millenarianism. The past has poured contradiction upon its theories, which have scanty intellectual basis in the best philosophical or theological thought of to-day. When these theories are the outcome of the passion for belief as a release from the truth which experience imposes upon us, religion, despite the declarations of those who assume a monopoly of spiritual superiority, becomes a denial of realities, a form of anæsthesia, a means of escape from the actualities of life. Their use of Scripture has been widely and justly criticized as unscientific and untrustworthy. I do not care to dogmatize upon a question so highly speculative, but I am not disposed to surrender to the inference that the Church which has mothered many nations is no more than a stop-gap during the lengthening ages before this strange vindication of her existence occurs. Nor do I incline to the notion that the Gospel of the Cross and the Resurrection is so unequal to the evangelization of mankind that, if it is not to fail utterly, it must be seconded by another parousia, such as millenarian teachers describe. The enterprise of elevating the Faith into genuine holiness and catholicity, of bringing beneath its control the accumulations of knowledge, of readjusting an exceedingly complex social situation to its precepts, is not advanced by this theory. It is really a return to Jewish provincialism, involving those materialistic ideas which invaded Christianity at its genesis, and voicing a despair of humanity which may easily be perverted into pharisaism. Be content to know that

the Incarnation is the permanent factor of human life, by the abiding presence in the Church and in believers of the Holy Spirit, and that His enduement is a far more effectual solvent of the difficulties you will encounter than belief in a second physical manifestation of the Messiah. Possess your souls in patience until your Lord shall be pleased to appear, and may He find you intent not so much upon an open heaven as upon a regenerated earth, and more solicitous for its betterment than to decree the moment or the manner of His coming!

The second tendency of present day preaching resents the humanity of Jesus, and is more insidious than many are aware. It received impetus from the reaction against the naturalism of the last century, which maltreated religious consciousness and strove to reduce its convictions to a merely physiological significance. Yet there is a paramount truth in the great statement that "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,"[11] to which much popular theology and hortatory preaching do no sort of justice. Mr. A. Clutton-Brock, the English essayist, avers that a pulpit which accentuated the genuineness of the Temptation of Our Lord or the reality of His cry of agony on the Cross would be suspect. There is a cardinal truth in the idea of Christ as the "Pleroma," but it is not explained by loose phraseology, and when you assert the Deity of Christ define what you mean, and remember that the evolution of theological thought is the record of a persistent attempt to solve the problems your assertion involves. Keep ever before you the historical Jesus, not "as a shapeless, colorless, featureless phantom, or an empty semblance of a man," but as the more worshipful because of His humanity. He trod the winepress alone, not in a foreign and fictitious perfection, immune from pain and grief, but in our actual sorrowing, suffering nature, and, as St. John describes Him, "bearing the cross for Himself."[12] The writer of the letter to the Hebrews, who certainly cannot be accused of a heretical Christology, and who lights up the doc-

[11] St. John i: 14.
[12] St. John xix: 17.

trine of the Trinity by blending the idea of plurality with the absolute unity of Monotheism, breathing into it the breath of life, and bringing God into personal contact with His offspring, after ascribing to Christ an everlasting authority as "the effulgence of the Father's glory and the very image of His substance," goes on to say, "It behooved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren, that He might become a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God." [13] At the risk of disturbing elements of worth, this value of Jesus as the Man must be recovered to the religious mind. Fortunately the text of the New Testament shows the perspective of the writers and how they saw Him as He is not always seen now. If we would be like Him, we must see Him in the same way, as He is, with no part of His nature magnified at the expense of another part. Then we shall gain, if not consistency, which is scarcely the chief consideration in the study of so profound a truth as the Incarnation, at any rate the reality of that Christ whom we would preach.

In the third place, those who accept the Jesus of history sometimes suppose that His humanity necessarily limits His divine nature, and by the one-sidedness of their conception rob the doctrine of His Person with one hand while enriching it with the other. The true view, I venture to think, is the exact reverse. No lines can be drawn here, nor any dualism set up. We cannot say of the statue, this is marble, that is the sculptor's thought, the ideal loveliness. They coincide, and are necessary to each other. Likewise the life of Jesus as the Christ was one life. Its fullness, vividness, experience, character, significance, whether termed human or divine for the convenience of our apprehension, sprang from the same source; all its investitures were of God. Nor will it do to assume that, in confuting the conclusions of the Gnostic heresy,[14] the apostles were unwarranted in applying to Jesus

[13] Hebrews ii: 17.

[14] There is a difference of opinion among authorities as to the existence of references in the New Testament to Gnostic heresies. Lightfoot, for example, affirms their presence, while Hort sees "no evidence of

the prerogatives of "the Christ." At Cæsarea Philippi the Master deliberately advanced beyond the functions of Teacher and Healer and asserted His Messianic dignity.[15] He knew the varied history of the title, and the hopes it had excited only to disappoint them. Those hopes, of which the most memorable expression in prophecy was the portraiture of the "Suffering Servant of Jehovah," which emerged from the travail of the Exile, had filled the hearts and stimulated the activities of the Hebrew people. In spite of adversity and postponement they were earnestly entertained. Yet such was the national pre-occupation of Israel when Jesus appeared, that even the Baptist failed to recognize in the Nazarene the advent of the long-expected Deliverer, and voiced his uncertainty in the query, "Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?"[16] In discarding the merely national elements of the Messianic character, Jesus spiritualized and universalized the Messianic mission, and demonstrated that its glory was realized and reflected in His own Person.

His uniqueness has a distinction entirely its own, independently of corroborative teaching. He left the fields of His peaceful ministry for those of combat with the powers of ecclesiastical hierocracy and Roman rule. Here took place the fateful transition into that generic idea of the Divine Saviour "Who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification,"[17] which separated Him from all the prophets of Israel. At their height these seers were still merely God's humble messengers. The Messiah who hovered on the verge of their religious and political horizon was no more than His chief messenger, and had no relation in their thought or intention with the cosmic Christ of the New Testament. It is with this Christ that you are chiefly concerned, the universalized, glorified Son of God; Saviour and Judge of

Gnosticizing tendencies" among the primitive churches "but only a dangerous fondness for Jewish trifling both of the legendary and casuistical kind."

[15] St. Matthew xvi: 13 ff.

[16] St. Matthew xi: 3.

[17] Romans iv: 25.

men. In Him is the purpose of all time, the moral efficiency of all men, the spiritual plenitude of all life. Yet, as has been remarked, had modern censorship existed in Scriptural eras, perhaps one set of entries would have omitted the later development of His consciousness; another, His miracles of physical healing; a third, the references to His humanness. But He is depicted by those to whom He revealed Himself most openly in these and other phases of His being, which they enumerate without any attempt to reconcile them. Their one tremendous, fervid idea of Jesus, which melted everything else with resistless ardor, and resolved all lesser distinctions in its emotional and spiritual content, was first derived from His own teaching, afterwards inculcated by St. Paul, for whom the real Jesus was the Risen Christ, and still later by St. John, who mediated the Immanence of God through the Logos.

Am I too bold in claiming that this teaching is the core of all Scriptural revelation and religion, old or new, and of the truth and right they severally and unitedly contain? I think not, since the witness of the Church supports the affirmation that the theophanies of the Old Testament, the doctrines of the New Testament, and whatever in them appeals to the highest faculties of man and delivers him from sin, are summed up in the manifold meaning of Christ as the Word of the Father. I earnestly advise you to proclaim this truth, in which the supreme issues of your message meet. It gives a new meaning to the whole of life, human and divine, wherein Christ lives and reigns through the Eternal Spirit. "The Father loveth the Son and showeth him all things that Himself doeth."[18] This is the primal claim of the Christian revelation, on which its language of confession, its worship, and its exhortation are based. For if Christianity, thus viewed, cannot consolidate the race in Christ, and redeem it by His mediatorship, it means nothing more, and does nothing more than any other literary Faith.

The object of this discussion, however, is not theological

[18] St. John v: 20.

exposition, but to ascertain, as far as is possible, the preaching values of a correct Christology. I have mentioned the three presentations of the Person of Christ which are most general because He is the Alpha and Omega of whatever you have to offer to the Church and the world. To return to His preaching methods, they differed from all other kinds in their revelatory character, which gave His message its unique supremacy. Much that He said was expressed in parables familiar to the daily experience of His hearers, and enforced by metaphors taken from their surroundings. This simplicity of treatment was exactly suited to the statement of divine truths, into whose depths the most acute minds have cast their plumb lines only to find them unfathomable. He spoke with a "timeless voice to the permanent needs of men" in the oracular forms common to Oriental discourse, and left what He imparted *in situ:* the gold of virgin ore which His disciples were afterwards to mine, smelt and circulate. The more elastic movements of preaching, often forbidden by routine and circumscribed divines, were recognized and provided for by Him. All truth was His sphere, and when you are firmly attached to His Person and His Gospel you also are free to move in every area of reality. Like every other great work of God, the teaching of Jesus cannot be understood and applied in a limited period. It has in it elements of ageless strength, which will not be at the beck and call of human impatience; and it resembles the creative processes which, never hastening, never resting, inevitably accomplish their mission. Besides a divine simplicity and profundity, there is in the preaching of our Lord infinite variety with one consistent aim, and all inclusive sympathy accompanied by unswerving fidelity. These traits, or others equally remarkable, are the spontaneous sources of words which were indeed spirit and life—the vocal expressions of the Divine will that men "may have life, and may have it more abundantly." [19] Although Nicodemus testified truly of the works of Jesus, he did not probe to the center of His power, as did St. Peter

[19] St. John x: 10.

with the pathetic query, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."[20] Here you will find the eclipse of physical miracle and the essence of Christ's authority over the souls and consciences of men. He drew them to Himself by the truths He enunciated and made radiant in the light of His personality. To believe them and to love Him will bring the preacher into the presence of God. From the auspicious hour when He stood in the synagogue at Nazareth and read from the book of the prophet Isaiah to the close of His earthly ministry, He was intent upon the generation in human hearts of the life He shared with the Father. The duplication of this purpose is the rationale of your preaching, and those who shrink from it should recall that "he builds too low who builds beneath the sky."

Further, the Gospel, as Jesus proclaimed it, has nothing to hide: it is of the day, not of the night; the light of life eternal shines in and through it, and renders mere expedients superfluous. The defensive armor of an apologetic is not its main protection, as some thinkers who are bogged in their favorite metaphysic would have us suppose. Only the inexperienced advocate will show willingness to rely too exclusively upon their formulas. The strength of that Evangel is in its faithful affirmations; its seed is in itself; it will speedily demonstrate the value of its proclamation wherever this is given.

The distinction between Jesus as Teacher and Preacher, which places emphasis upon the former office, can be pushed too far. Assuredly He was the Teacher, developing His doctrine by educational methods in those who were ignorant of His message and in others who were in training for its dissemination. Yet He looked beyond the knowledge He imparted to the character that knowledge was intended to originate. It was not alone the instructed, but also the regenerated spirit which He sought. His precepts were creative of the recipient's vital experience, and became a saving grace as well as an evident reality. As Teacher, Jesus dealt with

[20] St. John vi: 68.

an ethic not peculiar to Christianity; as Prophet, He communicated the spiritual dynamic without which neither the highest knowledge nor the emotions it kindles can be translated into life and action. The teaching phase of His ministry was blessed indeed; but what shall be said of its inspirational nature? Here His soul absorbed other souls in an enduring fellowship of creative love, and it is of the utmost importance that this fellowship should be the ruling factor in your heralding of His Evangel.

There is not, nor could there be, a higher Christology than that of apostolic preaching. The writers of the New Testament maintained that the perfect human holiness of Jesus was assured by His union with the Father, although some of His Divine attributes, according to St. Paul, were consciously held in abeyance. It was part of His sacrifice that He should refuse to know as man what He could not learn while tabernacled in the flesh. Yet being sinless, He was emancipated from the bondage sin inflicts upon the spiritual apprehension, and this accounted for His infallible knowledge of Divine truth. Further, the apostolic epistles assume that those to whom they are addressed are already acquainted with the elementary facts and realities of the Christian revelation. They very rarely affirm in so many words or state in categorical forms that our Lord was divine. But that they believed in His divinity as they did in the air they breathed is shown in their multiform assumptions of its reality: in the value they attach to His sufferings and death, and by their trust in His mercy and justice as the Saviour and Judge of the world.

It was not the human Jesus upon whom St. John and St. Paul concentrated their thought and exposition, but the Only Begotten and exalted Son of God. In the Fourth Gospel there is no account of His helpless infant years, of His growth in wisdom and stature; no limitation of His knowledge or His power. Here He knows and foreknows everything: He chooses to lay down His life and to take it again. The discourses, the miracles, the narratives of the evangelist, alike

expound the mystery of the Incarnation and are designed to bring out its various aspects. For St. Paul, Jesus is the εἰκών of God, the archetype of the ideal world, the πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως, by Whom all things were made, in Whom they cohere, by Whom they will be reconciled and judged. The Christology of St. Paul exceeds the Petrine confession in its use of terms born of the revelation he had directly received of God and also from his love of Christ, an intensely vital and personal relation which has no parallel in the history of discipleship. James Robertson Cameron says of it, "Love is essentially the sense of personality; and where love is life, as in the soul of Paul, it speaks in language suitable to personality alone. Hence amid the forms in which the thinker had perforce to clothe his thought, and which vary with their time, are the forms and phraseology of love welling from a depth which time can never touch, and which belong to the immemorial speech of prayer." [21]

When St. John and St. Paul had exhausted every category at their disposal, they still felt that these were utterly inadequate to express the pregnant Personality of Jesus, and the other New Testament writers shared their conviction. If the Hebrew seer in imagination assembled every Israelite at Mount Sinai for the giving of the law, the Apostles summoned the world to Calvary and to the garden of the Resurrection. Christ's Atonement for sin, His victory over death, His eternal sovereignty were the themes of their preaching. The Kingdom of God was merged in the Son of God, the heavenly Christ. Where they showed comparative indifference to details of the Galilean ministry, it was because they had established an even more direct means of access to the Redeemer than through the reports of His earlier disciples. The earthly life of the Christ, Whom St. Paul would no longer know after the flesh, was an interval of humiliation for the sake of man, which lay between His preëxistence in the form of God and the enthronement that followed it. St. John gives no place to the Kenosis: Divine glory and power continually

[21] *The Renascence of Jesus*, p. 12.

radiate from the Only Begotten One, and the beloved disciple asserts the divinity of his Lord almost more explicitly than does even St. Paul.

The Spirit of God is the supreme medium of communication, and belief in the diffusion of His power through the Christian mind as well as by special visitation was common to the members of the apostolic Church. From Him they received a baptism of illumination which produced the New Testament and built the *Ecclesia.*[22] The meditative insight of St. John, for whom the Incarnation fulfilled all life by evolving in men the highest being; the dialectical energy of St. Paul, who, after his experience on the road to Damascus, naturally dwelt upon the effect of the death of Christ in destroying the reign of sin; the sobering ethic of St. James; the stirring exhortations of St. Peter; the bold contrasts made by the writer of the letter to the Hebrews between the Old and the New Covenants; and the visions of the Apocalypse were alike the result of this Divine charisma upon their varied temperaments and historic and experimental knowledge of Jesus. In becoming speculative, they did not cease to be practical. The world was continually before them, charged with implications which the era intensified to the last degree, and it was for them the battle ground of the eternities. Moral forces determined the issues which baffled emperors and philosophers. The whole creation was spiritually idealized, and gained a hitherto unheard-of splendor and importance, of which Christ was the pivotal Personality and the everlasting Conqueror.

By these and other developments of doctrine the Apostles expounded the teaching of Jesus concerning Himself, His relations with the Father, with mankind, and with the eternities. They viewed His earthly existence as an unprecedented manifestation of that Divine Wisdom and Love which live and move where Time is and also where Time is not. When

[22] Cf. *The Spirit. The Relation of God and man considered from the Standpoint of Recent Philosophy and Science.* Edited by B. H. Streeter.

His earthly stay was terminated He reëntered His permanent home, and there received the reward of His great adventure in the authority He exercises over the new moral creation which is His Church.

It is not germane to our aim to discuss at length the legitimacy of this process of development which, as you may recollect, Cardinal Newman skillfully employed in his defense of traditional theology. Those who assert that it was the result of the indwelling of the Spirit, by Whose ministry the Apostles interpreted the historical Jesus in terms of the Græco-Jewish philosophy of religion, and thus satisfied the expanding needs of the Christian dispensation, have a considerable weight of testimony upon their side.[23] Doubtless much that had been germinal in the Living Word then blossomed and bore fruit. The implicit merged into the explicit, the potential became active and grew in proportion to the pressure of events, drawing upon contemporary systems for their ways and means of expression. When, for example, in the fourth Gospel the introspective heart of the Apostle went beyond the synoptic teaching and substituted for the theocratic idea of the Kingdom the idea of the eternal life of its subjects through vital union with the Incarnate Word; or again, when St. Paul turned to those juridical procedures by which he enforced justification by faith, the difference between them and also between their teaching and that of the Synoptics was unmistakable. But are these variations of necessity a derogation of the Divine truth of the Gospel in which its ethic is supplanted by purely theological conceptions? Not a few scholars answer in the affirmative, and speak disparagingly of the process; others enthusiastically endorse it. Our main interest in the controversy is that of the preacher who, while resolutely concerned for the validity of his message, is also free to retain his discretionary rights in judging methods of interpretation, and need be shut off from nothing in Divine revelation which can make him "ap-

[23] Hort denies the presence of any Greek influence in the Apostolic mind and doctrine. See his *Judaistic Christianity*.

proved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth.''[24] When, as Principal Denney has reminded us, critics complain that St. Paul is unintelligible, or that he expounds Christianity in a way which does it every kind of injustice, and is entirely inadmissible, we wonder if those who make these rash assertions are aware that the Apostle had undergone a transforming experience, which is the classic of evangelical apologetics, before he made a single speculation upon it.[25] His argument was the outgrowth of his vital contact with Christ: his epistles were the product of that contact, and the note of passionate conviction which it inspired vibrates through every line. Are we to infer from these objections that Christianity would have been advantaged, had St. Paul and his fellow Apostles not felt and reasoned as they did? On the contrary, the success of their propaganda exemplifies afresh the grateful truth that difficulties agitated by academic discussion subside when transferred to the jurisdiction of history.

In conclusion, great souls are an epitome of the race, and in such souls as St. Paul, St. John and their colleagues it was born anew to religious opportunities. They were the first to reflect the Everlasting Light which has illuminated the world; the universal diffusion of which, but for them, might have been indefinitely postponed. Deprived of the physical presence of the Christ Who was ''the lodestar of their one desire''; thrown upon a cruel and merciless society; confronted by a proud pantheistic paganism, and by the turpitude of a social system trembling on the verge of dissolution, they nevertheless lodged the Gospel of the grace of God in the heart of mankind, built the Church, wrote the New Testament, and pushed their embassy to the frontiers of the Roman Empire. Through their ambassadorship the Odyssey of Divine Redemption has been written into the records of men and nations, and from it have arisen those great commonwealths

[24] II Timothy ii: 15.

[25] Principal James Denney: *The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation*, p. 179.

which have advanced every lawful freedom. Translate these facts into your own conception of the nature and triumph of the Apostolic Evangel and into the vernacular of to-day, and you will discover that it was the life derived from their Incarnate Lord, which made the tent-maker of Tarsus and the fishermen of Galilee trustees of His Mission and spiritual guardians of the Christian Dispensation.

CHAPTER II

PROPHETS AND PREACHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Ephesians iv: 11–13.

CHAPTER II

PROPHETS AND PREACHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

A golden age of preaching—St. Chrysostom—St. Augustine—A period of decline—Revival under St. Bernard—The friars—Wycliffe—Savonarola—The Reformation period—Preaching in the seventeenth century—Wesley—Whitefield—Jonathan Edwards—The Evangelicals—Schleiermacher—Eminent American and British preachers.

I

The orientation of the apostolic mind became the predisposing power of Christian preaching, enabling it to avoid stagnancy and confusion, and to sustain a progressive ministry of New Testament truth. Although the broadly distributive influence of that mind has defied theory or definition, we know that the Apostles, who were not elected by the Church but were instrumental in her creation, gave to her ordained servants the living spirit and literature which no sacerdotal hypothesis has yet fully apprehended. The essence of the Gospel they formulated was rendered available for every tongue and has been made vocal to mankind. In this is the organic nexus between them and every ambassador of God. We do not inherit the canonical extension of an apostolate which died with the last of the Twelve, but our maintenance of their mission is in itself the most substantial witness to the spiritual realities communicated by the Apostles. The visible ways and means of faith and doctrine which insure the evangelical fellowship of believers are confirmatory of your authority as preachers. They have given proof of the genuineness of your office without overtaxing credence, and in spheres amenable to the laws of evidence. The inner world of the human heart and conscience, which is infinitely greater than

the farthest spaces of the physical universe, has been more profoundly moved toward goodness by Christian preaching than by any other agency of the Church. This statement is demonstrable in the motives, the ideals, and the external institutions of benevolence and justice which that preaching has created. Its functions operated from the first, and help to explain the remarkable growth of the new Faith recorded in the Book of Acts. Eusebius, commenting in his *Ecclesiastical History* upon this growth, declared that the disciples built up the superstructure of the churches, the foundations whereof the Apostles themselves had laid, everywhere prosecuting the preaching of the Gospel, sowing the seeds of heavenly doctrine, and leaving their own coasts to do the work of evangelists among those who had never heard of the Redeemer. I propose to name some of the chief figures in this succession of saints, confessors and advocates, which has continued until the present time and will endure to the end. The treatment must necessarily be somewhat discursive. For it is not my task to expound the psychological and philosophical elements involved in the evolution of Christian thought and preaching, or to analyze the different sources of revelation, tradition, dogma, reason and experience, from which they derived their various forms. These questions belong to those more competent teachers who, in Bacon's happy phrase, "visit and uncover their foundations and fountains," a process in which one who is not an expert is apt to be an intruder. If some periods and preachers are apparently slighted or even left out of account altogether, it is because space forbids the mention of any except those identified with specific changes in the development of your vocation. It may be said in parenthesis that the development goes behind the New Testament Dispensation, unifying Hebrew and Gentile, prophet, apostle and preacher in a logical sequence that can be readily traced. In prophecy, thus comprehensively viewed, imperfect methods have evolved less imperfect ones, and, correspondingly, higher forms of advocacy have recapitulated lower forms. The self-correcting character of your office

keeps it in its appointed orbit, and makes you more or less consciously subordinate to it. The chief object of this brief sketch of the prophets and preachers of the Christian Church is so to stimulate your appreciation of them and their work, that you may be induced to familiarize yourselves with the spacious backgrounds in which they moved, and be made more fully aware of the unspeakable honor and responsibility that attend the Christian ministry.

The extraordinary advance of Christianity aroused the hate of Judaism and the resentment of the Roman government: formidable foes against which the first apologists contended as writers rather than preachers. Justin Martyr, however, left a reputation as a debater, and Tertullian's impetuous strength was by no means limited to defensive tactics. Cyprian was a forcible speaker, and in his *Epistle to Donatus* he insisted upon the wisdom of cultivating a simple, unpretentious style. But it was Origen who introduced a radical change in homiletics, of which the sermons of his predecessors, so far as can be ascertained from the few specimens extant, had given no hint. His choice Biblical expositions, their thorough design and pertinent treatment, were the product not of the era but of the man; and one may discern between their lines the indications of a larger knowledge and a more gracious zeal than they actually express. The sermons of the Fathers who followed the Apologists reached their climax during the fourth century and the first half of the fifth, a period which is rightly regarded as the golden age of preaching in the Nicene Church. It ceased to be formal, abstract, disputatious, and became elucidative, proclamatory, even dramatic. The patronage of the State, although mischievous in other directions, supplied a needed dignity to the pulpit, and the increase of educational facilities furnished it with a more competent ministry. Forensic eloquence was on the wane; political orators had ceased to charm; and the people turned to the masters of Christian discourse with an avidity which implied their high quality. In the Eastern Church Eusebius of Cæsarea, Athanasius of Alexandria, Cyril of Je-

rusalem, among the orthodox, and Ulfilas, the missionary to the Goths, together with Arius the heresiarch, among the Arians, were alike distinguished for their notable expansion of preaching ideals. The three Cappadocians, Basil of Cæsarea, his brother Gregory of Nyssa and his friend Gregory Nazianzen showed by their broad culture, penetrative insight and felicity of expression, that the ambassador of God could enforce upon men the principles and laws of moral and religious life.

The prince of them all was St. John of Antioch, better known as Chrysostom—the "golden-mouthed"—a name borrowed from Dion of Prusa and applied to the great Patriarch of Constantinople soon after his death because of his singularly chaste and lofty eloquence. His prophetic instinct surmounted every hindrance, and his command of the inevitable word made him the exponent of Christian truth in the statelier forms of Hellenic oratory. Born of aristocratic parentage at Antioch about 347 A. D., the future prophet and bishop of the Eastern Church owed much to his noble mother Anthusa, a woman renowned for her Christian piety, who guarded him against the vices of one of the most splendid yet dissolute centers of the Roman Empire, and directed his precocious aptitudes toward those virtuous habits which her own life exemplified. His intimacy with his schoolmate Basil, of whom little is known, and the counsel of Meletius, the godly bishop of his diocese, seconded her efforts. A constant search of the Scriptures during his monastic discipline intensified his desire to preach, and such was the esteem in which he was held by his brethren that he was offered the bishopric before his ordination to the priesthood. The undimmed radiance which made him one of the first six luminaries of the pulpit shone on believers and unbelievers alike, and Christians of every persuasion have found in him a healing and a guiding light. "He speaks and writes," said Cardinal Newman, "as one who was ever looking out with sharp but kindly eyes upon the world of men and their history, and hence he has always something to produce about them, new or old, to the pur-

pose of his argument." His sermons were nothing less than religious events of primary importance; and their hold upon the spiritual imagination persists unweakened among homiletical students to this hour. Although like Origen he was one of the first of the Fathers to enlist in behalf of the Gospel the classic traditions which were entirely appropriate to the lucidity of his reasonings and the choiceness of his rhetoric, this unaccustomed harness sat lightly on evangelical truth because of the support of his native genius. The play of his trained and powerful mind was suffused with the equanimity the Greeks called χάρις, a quality which usually wins an audience. Yet neither that quality nor his fertility of conception or splendor of diction gave him his permanence. This was due to his prompt seizing of the situation, his massing of the array of divine verities, his alliance with facts familiar to the people, and most of all, to the resistless onfall with which he swept forward to secure his objective. Nothing could quench his love for God and man, nor lessen the outflow of his soul, nor relax his will to serve his generation. No great poet ever rounded out his practice to the boundaries of his conception more completely than did St. Chrysostom in his preaching; and what in the majority of divines remain unrealized ideals became in him actual attainments. He was small of stature but of impressive presence and demeanor, with every accent of authority and appeal in voice and gesture. He won the reverence of his fellow citizens, not only by his heart searching or consoling exhortations, but by his blending of vision and practicality, his generous charity, disinterestedness, and the fortitude which enabled him "to sit unclouded in the gulf of fate."

In the Western Church the renowned Bishop of Hippo, St. Augustine, was the one preacher who reached the eminence of St. Chrysostom. Their names shine as twin stars in the prophetic firmament of the Church and rain a lasting influence upon her ambassadors. St. Augustine stood in direct succession to Tertullian, who had his fervor without his tranquil massiveness of mind, and to St. Cyprian, whom he ex-

ceeded in breadth if not in spirituality. His strong masculine nature made no concession to soft urbanities, nor did he sacrifice the religious development of men to their mere approbation. Note this aspect of his ministry, for it is probably his principal bequest to the preacher. The inflexible determination of St. Augustine's intellectual and moral processes gave intrinsic value to his thought and utterance. These took manifold ways but the urgency that impelled them was always present, and never more so than under adverse circumstances and in threatening crises. Time has reversed some of his verdicts, but neither his fondness for allegory nor his occasional carelessness of preparation could obscure the originality and profundity of his thinking, the force of his presentation, or the devoutness of his mysticism. The wisdom which clarifies abstruse themes because it is rooted in holiness was another of his gifts. He excelled in the statement of basic truths which no subsequent growth of knowledge can change; his arguments glowed with burning ardor, and frequently aroused a favorable response not only in sympathetic but in hitherto alienated hearers. He gave the revelation of God in Jesus Christ a new distinction, and indicated fresh methods and avenues for its proclamation. In estimating him as a preacher, you should remember that he was also a theologian, a commentator, a controversialist, an ethical philosopher, an ecclesiastical statesman, and a bishop burdened with the administrative duties of office; in brief, the most alert and universal intellect of the ancient Church, with a versatility of talents and a wealth of genius which have been unsurpassed since the apostolic age. Best of all, he was one of the few really great men who have loved God with a consuming passion. A disciple of St. Paul, his youthful career resembled that of the apostle to the Gentiles in that he was "pressed on every side, yet not straitened; perplexed, yet not unto despair; pursued, yet not forsaken; smitten down, yet not destroyed."[1] Rescued from the folly of his youth by Divine intervention, his experiences are delineated in the well-known

[1] II Corinthians iv: 8, 9.

Confessions which should be studied by every preacher. They depict a very puissant nature enmeshed in vice, but liberated by the grace of God through the entreaties and prayers of his devoted mother, Monica, and the admonitions of St. Ambrose of Milan.[2] In his darkest wanderings he came to the place of illumination and peace, where in his vision he saw before him the sacred writings, and heard the voice commanding him, "Tolle, lege; tolle, lege"—"Take up and read." This he did, and to such purpose that after his conversion, in his thirty-second year, he made Scripture the absolute test of faith and doctrine. Of all the leaders of the Patristic period none was more Biblical in practice than this encyclopedic African Father who embodied an epoch, created a school of prophecy, recast the creeds of Christendom in a legal and philosophic mold, and stamped his personality and ideas upon the religious development of the last fifteen hundred years.

After the altitudes of St. Chrysostom and St. Augustine there came a prolonged era of depression, during which the experimental realities of religion were displaced by a deism similar to that which has recurrently stultified theology and preaching. The fanciful treatment of Holy Writ, the excessive recital of hagiologies, and an infatuated veneration for saints and martyrs obsessed the clergy of the Eastern Church. Polemics were rampant, and the bigotries of an exclusive type of ecclesiasticism coincided with a marked decline in missionary zeal. When Christianity is thus harassed, forbidden either to improve its apparatus or to extend its domains, such is its incurable vitality that it tends to degeneracy rather than to petrifaction, and wastes upon dissensions and abnormalities what was meant for the regeneration of the race. Such was the case during the time in question, when the

[2] St. Ambrose was scarcely surpassed in eloquence by his famous disciple, St. Augustine, and was excelled by none in courage. His refusal of the Eucharist to the Emperor Theodosius until he had done penance for his ruthless massacre of the people of Thessalonica is an instance of that fearless resolution so characteristic of this stalwart defender of the Faith.

manna denied to the destitute corrupted. The world lay in a chaos choked with the débris of former empires and civilizations, out of which arose the tortuous beginnings of mediævalism. Lawlessness, internecine war and universal agitation grimly testified to the federal strength of the Roman Empire even in its decadence, and to the loss sustained by its fall. Treading on the heels of these calamities, the Mohammedan hosts first invaded Europe, and their conquests augmented the weight of judgment upon the general depravity. The Christian pulpit was dumb and apparently dead; what articulation it gave to the Gospel came from the Eternal City, where the Holy See slowly gathered to itself the remnants of religion, government and organized society. Leo the Great and Gregory the Great were pontiffs whose pulpit advocacy earned the appellation given them. Under papal auspices heralds of the Cross were dispatched to every land, a vigorous policy which bore fruit in the missions of such pioneers as Saints Patrick, Columba, Augustine, Wilfrid, Gallus and Boniface. But the erection of a hierarchical absolutism upon the foundations of Rome's political supremacy engrossed the intellects which might have adorned the pulpit. "The gods," said Homer, "ever give to mortals their apportioned share of reason only on one day." And this was emphatically the day of the legislator, the scribe, the ritualist: they compiled the liturgies and enacted the laws of that imposing structure which for the next eight hundred years was destined to be the bulwark of Christendom and its court of final appeal. Prophecy was supplanted by the higher clericalism which had its exemplification in Hildebrand and Innocent III; and when after a lapse of seven centuries preaching moved out of its eclipse and received a semblance of recognition, it had been reduced to the shadow of its former self, a febrile thing, without animation or interest. The clergy herded together because they lacked theological independence of mind and dreaded the dangers of standing alone. Cloistral and parochial sermons were tissues of puerility, consisting mainly of monkish legends and super-

stitious tales. The homiletic of the fourth and fifth centuries, so Biblical, so replete with evangelical truth and experience, so capable of bringing men to God, was either forgotten or neglected.

This partial recovery of prestige by the preaching office preluded a belated upheaval, which occurred with the rise of the Scholastic theology, the sweeping reforms of Hildebrand, and the proclamation of the first crusade by Urban II and Peter the Hermit. The twelfth century began with an aurora of light which faded away in the fourteenth. Yet while it continued, the Church, awakened from her chiliastic dreams, rejoiced in the ministry of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, whose name is esteemed by Latin Christianity next to that of St. Augustine; of Jacques de Vitry, whose word moved France as she had not been moved in the memory of man; of the two mystics of St. Victor, Hugo and Richard, who, like Henry of Lausanne, preached a consoling gospel to the poor and needy. The long lingering radiance of St. Bernard, who is affectionately entitled "the last of the Fathers," is inseparably associated with the once desolate valley which he and his fellow Cistercians transformed into a garden of the Lord. He entered it an abbot twenty-four years old, at the head of a band vowed to the rule of St. Benedict. While he lived this austere discipline was strictly observed, and from his retreat at Clairvaux his message reached in ever-widening circles all the countries adjacent to France. He was the trusted friend and adviser of popes, monarchs, bishops, the lower clergy and the plain folk. Nothing which affected the honor of Christ seems to have escaped his attention, and his absorption in the labors of his international ministry delivered him from the perils of solitary religion. A wise statesman of the Church and a great ambassador of God to a turbulent age, St. Bernard summarized mediæval preaching as Michel Angelo did the Renaissance in art and Danton the French Revolution in politics. His refined appearance, clear and far-reaching voice, melodious accent, freedom from professional affectation, fecund imagination, pungent rebuke, discriminating praise, and subtle, per-

vasive spirituality, gave him a moral authority which enabled him to vanquish the violent Count of Aquitaine and dispense the Gospel to the multitudes. The humility of his heart surpassed the vigor of his mind and the wideness of his fame. The Spirit of God rested upon St. Bernard; he received an unction from the Holy One. The Emperor Conrad took from his hand the banner which led the second crusade; and what was of much greater consequence, the populace received the evangel of Christ from his lips. His beautiful piety had in it the winsome and haunting quality peculiar to the highest sanctities of mediævalism. It is revealed in the hymns he wrote, which have been translated from the Latin into English, and are now sung by Christians of every shade of belief. They take us back to the peaceful monastery of Clairvaux: to the beautiful valley where this consecrated monk imparted luster to his every thought of Jesus.

The mendicant Orders of St. Francis and St. Dominic rapidly brought mediæval preaching to its meridian; and with their decadence it sank into an equally rapid decline. While it was still in the ascendant, the friars labored assiduously, ennobling your vocation with the majestic intellect of St. Thomas Aquinas and the Christ-like lives of St. Francis of Assisi, St. Antony of Padua, Berthold of Regensburg and Francis Bonaventura. For a space the enthusiasm of the Fraticelli, those brothers of the lowly Nazarene who forsook all and followed Him, promised to bend stiff-necked ecclesiasticism to its will and bring the world nearer the goal of righteous obedience. But with their increase of earthly substance and power the Orders rapidly deteriorated, and their members became the objects of public reproach and scorn. The visions,

> "Fairer than the evening air,
> Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars,"

which men in daily contact with the beatific holiness of the youth of Assisi had found credible faded in the cold light of mundane actuality when that rare spirit was withdrawn from the earth. Those who bore his name and posed as advocates

of his purest ideals, while living on a naturalistic level, precipitated the incoming of carnal forces against which they made but an empty show of resistance. Their fraternities were eaten up with impiety, treason and hypocrisy. Yet, though prophecies fail, "charity never faileth," and the superhuman example of sacrificial service manifested in the ministry of the earlier friars has repeatedly invigorated the Church in all her branches.

The prelude to the Reformation was sounded by a relatively obscure recluse, Marsiglio de Mainardino,[3] who indited in his cell the treatise *Defensor Pacis,* which anticipated much we deem modern in spirit and form. Out of the twilight in which Wycliffe moved as the last of the Scholastics and the first of the Reformers, the "Evangelical Doctor" further developed the doctrine for which Marsiglio and John of Jandun had been condemned as heretics. Himself a notable preacher, Wycliffe prized the spoken Word, and sent out his "poor priests," the true successors of the earlier friars and the forerunners of Wesley's itinerants, to every hamlet and cross-road in the island Kingdom. It was his lot, however, to be as one born out of due time and to have to attack evils and abuses at a moment when their abolition was all too likely to be followed by worse evils and abuses. He had to deal with the Plantagenets, whose disposition was correctly symbolized by the leopards on their shields, and with a nation not yet morally matured for his daring projects. He forsook the Court and clung to the people during the woes brought upon them by a spontaneous and widespread revolt which was quenched in blood. But he confessed that he often stammered out meanings he could not always make clear. Nothwithstanding his self-abnegating loyalty to a nascent democracy, in which he presents a favorable contrast to Luther's subsequent conduct under somewhat similar conditions, Wycliffe was deficient in those constructive talents which are essential to the stability

[3] Marsiglio de Mainardino is distinguished by the best authorities from Marsilius of Padua, although in the British Museum Catalogue they are identical. The former was a canon of Padua in 1316.

of reform. Whatever the faults of the Church, and their name was legion, she had been built up by the untold pains and labors of the past. His oscillations between what he deplored in her and what he could not formulate for her purification indicated how vividly he reflected the transitions of his time and seemed to consign his opinions to defeat and oblivion. But, although rejected at home, he was vindicated abroad, where in Bohemian Protestantism Hus raised the illustrious Englishman's creed to the status of a national faith. The burning of his exhumed bones and of the living body of his disciple by the incensed hierarchy of the Council of Constance accomplished nothing that was not entirely favorable to the intrepid enterprise of both Reformers.[4]

Savonarola, after the fashion of Melchizedek, was a solitary beacon blazing in the pulpit with a courage and a naturalness which met their usual fate of suppression and martyrdom. George Eliot has given in *Romola* a keen analysis of the man and his environment, his sources of strength and weakness, his personality and his preaching gifts, and has shown how at times he was flesh and blood and again spiritual steel. With consummate skill she indicates the disillusionment which fell upon him. The Fra Girolamo of San Marco, whom the Piagnoni heard with ecstasy, retired to his little cell, a prophet fallen from his high estate. He who had once been king and more than king in Florence lived to be hooted through the streets and was with difficulty preserved from the rage of the disappointed mob. God, Whom he had invoked, had not arisen, nor had His enemies been scattered. Savonarola had given to the city the best years of his heart's love and restless labors; night and day, in health and sickness, he had been at her call. He had even been ready to supply her with the miraculous exhibition for which she clamored; but for all this service and subjection she paid him with insults and threats. Perhaps there mingled in his bitter disappointment at this sequel an aching wonder whether it would have been better for him, the higher soul, to have taken upon him robust Fra

[4] See author's *The Three Religious Leaders of Oxford*, pp. 5–170.

Domenico's part and proved his faith by devoting himself all alone to the fire.

None of these reformers had the conceptual strength which enabled Calvin to lay the granitic foundations of intellectual Protestantism. Nor were they so strategically situated as Luther, whose organ voice thundered forth the summons from captivity to freedom, which was already murmuring in the enlightened conscience of Europe. Yet when the day broke, men saw, not without surprise, that the heavenly law of adaptation had victoriously shaped the issues for which the pre-Reformation prophets pleaded. They kept their vigil through a long and tempestuous night. In them, as in the Mediævalists, the Scholastics, the Friars, the prophetic succession had been maintained. In that succession St. Bernard, St. Thomas, St. Francis, Marsiglio, Wycliffe, Hus and Savonarola stand near to God's right hand now because they were wedded to His purpose then.

II

The Reformers could do no other than restore preaching to its apostolic honor and rights. They faced earnest and religiously disposed people, whom the new learning had made resentful of *ex cathedra* dictation, and skeptical spirits who confused Christianity with a paganized ecclesiasticism. The stately shrines and abbeys through which we gladly enter into the life of the Middle Ages did not satisfy the one group; the traditions they housed left the other suspicious and censorious. It speaks volumes for the allegiance of the average individual to the essentials of the Faith, that he did not permit it to collapse beneath the pressure put upon it. Elaborate rites, gorgeous robes, ceaseless chantings and ceremonials were as distasteful to the Reformers and their adherents as were the archaic abstractions of the later Scholastics. Though formerly revered, these practices had been divorced from the Evangel upon which the soul must feed to live. They could not appease men's spiritual hunger for the living bread sent

down from heaven, nor subdue the agitation for a larger measure of liberty in political and religious life. Luther and those who learned of him reverted to Holy Writ as their authority, and to the Pauline doctrine of Justification by Faith as their vital theme. This doctrine did not contain the entirety of the Gospel, but it gave an initial assurance of God's free and unmerited grace in Jesus Christ which jeopardized social and sacerdotal tyrannies and eventually shattered their supremacy. The schism which ensued absorbed the ethical life of the Renaissance somewhat at the cost of its æsthetic culture, and it also compelled the Roman hierarchy to give less attention to paintings, sculpture, or the building of magnificent temples, and more to the equipment of an efficient pulpit. The priest proved unequal to the emergency: the prophet tore off the fetters with which the priest had bound his vocation. Both parties in the now divided Church paid tribute to preaching, and a mightier race of theologians and preachers appeared upon the scene. John Wild, Luiz of Grenada, Thomas of Villanova and Carlo Borromeo among the Roman Catholics; and Luther, Calvin, Melanchthon, Zwingli, Bullinger, Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Jewel, Bradford, Knox, Hamilton and Wishart among the Reformers, were the principals of a list of more or less familiar doctors and divines. It is quite impossible and, indeed, unnecessary to discuss them as their deserts require. One can only bestow a hurried glance here and there and glean, if may be, some information for our advantage.

John Jewel is not often mentioned; yet this bishop of Salisbury was the first Anglican preacher of the Elizabethan age. Nicholas Ridley is better known for his heroic martyrdom than for the theological guidance he gave Thomas Cranmer, the maker of modern Anglicanism. Luther and Calvin apart, no one of them has gripped the popular apprehension more tenaciously than John Knox in Scotland, or Hugh Latimer in England. The spectacle of Knox holding forth in St. Giles, Edinburgh, against the malignancies of the Papacy or the machinations of Mary the Fair, is very grateful to Protestant admirers. The preacher was not always magnanimous in his

strength; the princess was far from being altogether ignoble in her frailty. Both were resolute spirits in their respective ways, and the contrast between them makes a tempting theme upon which historians have not agreed. Though often in peril, Knox managed to escape the fagots. It was brave old Latimer whose story thrills the heart as much as that of Knox attracts the historic mind. The dauntless bishop stepped into the fire at Oxford as cheerily as he had been wont to ascend the pulpit at St. Paul's Cross. He died as he had lived,—consistent, steadfast, courageous, "jesting at the dawn with death," and exhibiting that humor which is an unfailing supply of the moral element in tragedy. Even at the stake he was still, as he had ever been, the prophet of the open spaces, whose preaching took additional color and significance from the fields and the farming pursuits of his yeoman ancestors. The result of nature, not of art, it retains in print the racy, shrewd, homely eloquence that won the hearts of his hearers; it is packed with current saws and maxims, redolent of the soil, versed in social practices, and has no sickly cast of over-introspective thought to hamper its movement or mar its quaint allusions and biting passages. Neither is it like the artless warblings of the bird that never round a tune. Everything in it has an ostensible end, which is kept steadily in view from the beginning. When you are inclined to use the speech of the plain people, turn from some recent claimants of that preaching virtue and take Latimer or Bunyan for your guide. They will reward you as neither the purveyors of embroidered phrases nor of the slang of gutterdom know how to do. Both laid on lustily, and healed with skillful tenderness the wounds they inflicted. Nor did Latimer's preaching wilt in the atmosphere of a licentious court. Above any Tudor bishop he rebuked the sins of his brutal monarch, of sycophantic and greedy nobles and of iniquitous judges and politicians.

In Germany during the seventeenth century, the weight attached to purely intellectual and doctrinal conceptions hindered the pulpits' adequate expression. The defects of current preaching were attributable to its lack of the sentiment

which fixes thought. Teutonic oratory of the period was ponderous, immobile, devoid of that play of imagination essential to ideas if they are to convince the heart as well as the reason; consequently it spent itself in alternating waves of dogmatism, mysticism and rationalism. Thus a religion which had originated in a revolutionizing movement of faith and morals and had satisfied the spiritual longings of the preceding generations, began to solidify into a formalism scarcely less proscriptive and detrimental than the sacerdotal pretensions against which it had successfully rebelled. Its freedom was employed for the sterilization of the emotions: it resembled those green islets in tropical seas which became encrusted with calcareous accretions on which nothing can grow. The betterment of these conditions began with Philipp Jakob Spener, whose pietism was a protest against the excessive theorizing and spiritual dearth of Lutheran orthodoxy. In southern Germany he and his colleague August Hermann Francke inaugurated a type of Puritanism which was developed by Georg Konrad Rieger, a preacher of such merit that he was favorably compared with Luther. Bengel, the commentator to whom Wesley was indebted for his *Notes on the New Testament,* and Mosheim, a learned and humane scholar and historian, who employed, as did Reinhard, an arresting style, were other serviceable men of the German Church.

In France the faith derived from subjective experience was voiced by Fénelon, whose sermons owe their strength to the element of devoutness, to meditation on divine things, and to instructive spirituality. He was an eminently gracious personality, whose place is among the noblest characters. Pascal was notable as a Christian philosopher though of course he was not a preacher. Saurin disclosed an excellence in the Huguenot pulpit which rivaled that of Pascal as a thinker, and Bossuet, "the eagle of Meaux," at this time attained those flights which made him the greatest modern apologist for Roman Catholicism. You note in Bourdaloue and Massillon, as in Bossuet, the felicity of form bespeaking the polite circles of somewhat artificial culture in which they moved. Impressive

as it is, it did not conciliate the antagonistic thinkers of France nor confute the acute skepticism and social unrest, which afterwards helped to wreck the French Church. Her clergy were implacable against even the shadow of doubt, and strenuously asserted the definitive authority of popes and councils over matters of faith and doctrine. Hence, questions which were answered in Great Britain received no sufficient reply in France, where attempts to extirpate heresy and unbelief served but to propagate them in the epoch-making work of the Encyclopedists. An unfortunate appeal to physical force instead of rational discussion was characteristic of the Gallican Church of the seventeenth century. It prevailed over Port Royal, and, acting under the delusion that the integrity of the State required the unity of the Church, precipitated the dissolution of both.

In Great Britain the Anglican Church has seldom been tolerant of those enthusiasms which led beyond the familiar range of a dutiful profession. Her aversion to extraordinary methods, while not always injurious, has frequently relegated her to a position of self-complacent inactivity. The prudential considerations arising out of a settlement that was at best a compromise gave her no sufficient foothold for aggressive Christianity. Those who subscribe to a policy of this type are apt to misjudge the intensities with which the Christian Evangel is rife, and to underrate the revivals it produces, which have an apostolic sanction and are as verifiable in their historical benefits as any other phase of Christian propaganda. Nevertheless, the leading Anglican preachers of the seventeenth century had virtues of their own; they were often strong without rage, animated without militancy; and if they were not luxuriant, neither were they flamboyant. They sometimes lacked warmth, but not so often conviction; persuasiveness was theirs, if not passion, and logic, if not imagination. To this school belonged "the judicious Hooker," author of *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity;* the saintly Bishop Lancelot Andrewes and the famous Archbishop Tillotson. The Sermons of Andrewes are nearer to our purpose than the grave

discourse of Hooker, who was a writer of rare quality rather than a preacher. They would now have to be interpreted to theological students, although they were then understood and appreciated by the wits and scholars of the Stuart court. Andrewes could not show the full proportions of Christian doctrine, but he could expound the premise that the Lord is our righteousness with extensive learning and delicate scrupulosity of mind. He took full toll of the conciliatory truths of the Gospel by extracting the last trace of meaning from its texts. Cudworth, Chillingworth and Barrow were exceedingly able preachers of an exceptional character, from whom Robert South and Jeremy Taylor stood somewhat apart. The sermons of South had the sententious boldness and dexterity of treatment and phrase which constituted them literature. Those of Taylor leaped forth from the universal heart of the poet who revels in exquisite analogies for the pleasure they excite in his own mind. Like the speeches of Burke, they were independent of the particular circumstances of their delivery: unlike those speeches they did not defer their imageries to the moment of their utterance. Taylor was a consummate master of English prose, whose opulence at times embarrassed his exposition; as Canon Simpson observes, it was the movement rather than the arrangement of his pulpit utterances which made him so acceptable to men and women of wide culture. I do not advise you to adopt his sermons as your models, but assuredly you should delve into their mines of wealth. Their profusion of symbolism and quotation is at times perplexing, but this can be pardoned in one who was first and last a prophet endeavoring to convey his message as he received it, without waiting to coördinate it with systematized doctrine, intent only upon its enforcement, and actuated by a catholicity foreign to his age.

Nonconformists, under the ban of the Stuarts, were naturally irritated and well nigh as inimical as the State clergy to the liberty of prophesying for which Taylor, after Milton, had made the noblest plea. Covenants or dragonades, the divinity of creeds or of kings, were alike antagonistic to a free pulpit.

Yet the Puritan temper against which Matthew Arnold railed was not the jaundiced Philistinism he conceived it to be. It evoked the phenomenal ministry of Baxter, the dreams of Bunyan, the discourses of Calamy, Howe, Owen and Goodwin, and determined the wanderings and voyages of the Pilgrims of the *Mayflower*. The "Hebraism" of New England eventually acquired an austere culture there, and generated in Massachusetts the ideal of public education as the duty of the State. Although it deserved a more just appraisal than that of "the apostle of sweetness and light," Puritanism had lost its first love, and shared the stultification which everywhere fell upon Protestant preaching. A conventional ethic or the rehashing of stale theological disputes monopolized it. The counsels of moderation in ecclesiastical differences, which men are slow to heed in times of bitter resentment, were vainly offered them by Baxter and a few like-minded eirenical spirits. Those counsels prevail now because of their intrinsic and reasonable liberalism. The unity and mutual understanding which Baxter labored to promote are the keynotes of Christian progress two hundred years and more after the Savoy Conference, and his later writings are entitled to the reverent attention of English-speaking men.

The hymns of Bishop Ken, the St. Francis of the Non-Jurors, and of Isaac Watts, the premier modern hymnologist in theistic ascription, were lasting gains in what was otherwise a period of distraction and cumbersome uselessness. Tillotson, like his younger fellow Anglican, Atterbury, seldom attempted to persuade the heart until he had convinced the mind. He was prejudiced against the intimate and direct in preaching, and even his commendations of Jesus were studiously reserved. Notwithstanding his thorough knowledge of the Scriptures, it did not seem to occur to him that the Kingdom of Heaven could be stormed by the violence of consecrated passion. His sedate manner endeared him to the Anglican theologians and clerics, and to statesmen and writers who despised enthusiasm. He became the pulpit prince of his century, and his sermons were translated into German for

the benefit of the Lutheran clergy. The conservative moralities which propose the good rather than the spiritual man were his pet theme. Even Joseph Butler, a vastly superior intellect to Tillotson, and a philosopher whose writings diffused a large and considerate temper in religious inquiries, had no wings for his apologetic. He could not, or, if he could, he would not explain the Gospel in terms of personal experience. On the other hand, he was chiefly instrumental in crushing skeptical deism, and thus unwittingly prepared the nation for the coming of the Wesleys, whose interpretation of the New Testament he sincerely deplored. It was left to them to gather into the fellowship of Christ the forsaken masses whom their mitred opponents could not reach, and to demonstrate that though the Teaching of their Lord had survived the criticisms of the recondite, it could not be successfully propagated without an emphatic reassertion of its supernatural character.

Viscount Morley has reminded us that "religion has many dialects, many diverse complexions, but it has one true voice —the voice of human pity, of mercy, of patient justice."[5] Not since that voice resounded in Jerusalem, Antioch, Athens and Rome had it been heard more fully and convincingly than from John Wesley. His matchless ministry, which was practically coextensive with the eighteenth century, was the outflow of a regenerated heart, a susceptible conscience, a benevolent intention, an indefatigable zeal, a ceaseless yearning after the souls of men. These great qualities were accompanied by his good works, sagacity, sense of orderliness, reverence and a unique gift of organization. Like St. Augustine, Thomas Bradwardine and Luther, he knew the religion of the heart, and the account of his conversion is another classic of the Pauline doctrine of Justification by Faith. It is difficult to overestimate the corrective values of Wesley's spiritual consciousness, when contrasted with the impotent and patronizing latitudinarianism which denied even the possibility of his transfer into the realm of a new being and all that this in-

[5] *Recollections,* Vol. I, p. 189.

volved. Those corrective values have become historic treasures of the world, to which political and philosophical writers, such as Lecky and John Richard Green, have borne witness, relating them to the religious and moral progress of mankind. It would be superfluous for me to attempt a full delineation of the evangelist and statesman of the modern Church, who was also the foremost personality of his century and has had no equal successor. He revealed a combination of characteristics seldom found in any individual, and unlike many of the strong men I have mentioned, some of whom were mentally his superiors, he thrived on tumult and opposition. The sequence of events placed him where his gifts and graces were broadened and consecrated by the contradictions of his age, and enabled him to utilize the abandoned purlieus of a degraded society, which his brethren had forsaken, for the transformation of its victims into haters of sin and lovers of holiness.

Study Wesley as you study no other modern preacher, and do this the more because a certain parochialism, tinctured with condescension, is occasionally to be detected in Puritan references to him. His amazing triumph over what appeared to be insuperable obstacles was not due to the profundity which men are wont to connect with the exposition of Pauline doctrine. As we have seen, the battle of the giants had already been waged by Butler and his fellow thinkers when Wesley came upon the field. His mind was prosaic, unallured by those hazardous metaphysical speculations which are the strength and the weakness of Calvinism. The boldness of imagination which frames theological hypotheses was foreign to his mental habit. He brought to the Gospel of the New Testament the phrase that upraises, the feeling that is most intense when most repressed, and the rational simplicity and lucidity of a typical eighteenth century scholar. His sermons contained much in little; their form was concise, their meaning perspicuous, their effect far deeper than that of contemporary orations of renown. He compelled a dissolute epoch to admit that Justification by Faith was more than a

theological term; that it was nothing less than a spiritual recreation of the human heart, which could not be fully explained in any language, however apposite. This primary service of preaching was accomplished amidst nearly every facility for treacherous and despicable traits, and in the full view of leaders of Church and State who evinced a lamentable indifference to the moral and social welfare of English-speaking nations. It kindled a revival of New Testament Christianity in an instinctively religious people, and restored their consciousness of God. Learned inquiry has seldom been congenial to the religious phenomena which that revival produced; nevertheless, though they remain among the mysteries of the spiritual realm, they accomplished the purification of individual and social life. When you are tempted to forego evangelicalism, and to fall back upon legalism or sacramentarianism, recall the higher clergy of the eighteenth century who did this, and compare their present oblivion with the dignity and honor of the religious Archimedes of his time: the Oxford cleric who discovered in his experience of Divine grace the leverage with which he seriously proposed to lift the lost and the profligate not only to decency but to God. Our troubled future, about which we hear so many varying forecasts, may have to wait for another anointed servant of the Lord, who, like Wesley, will transcend the chaos, and be borne upward to the freedom and the power of a religious renaissance as the angel of the Churches.

The outburst of sacred song which heralded the Evangelical Revival was a further token of its life-giving power. According to Dr. Martineau, Charles Wesley's hymns are, with the exception of the Scriptures, the grandest instrument of popular religious culture Christendom has produced. John Bakewell, Edward Perronet and Thomas Olivers, among others, also enriched the praise of the sanctuary with their lyrical compositions. The emotional side of the Revival received its climax at the moment from the pulpit eloquence of George Whitefield, who had that art of mingling the infinite with the commonplace, which is one requisite of effective preaching.

His fame is largely a matter of tradition which emphasizes his histrionic exuberance and marvelous voice. Yet these do not unfold the secret of Whitefield's ministry. Truths he could neither formulate nor cast in literary fashion were fused within him by his glow of soul and expressed with fluid energy. Even the small change of discourse was reminted by his volcanic manner. He quelled the mob with a gesture, and charmed Garrick, the foremost actor of the day, by his pathos in the utterance of a single word. Springing at a bound from a state of pupilage to one of absolute pulpit mastery, he retained his ascendancy despite episcopal inhibition and rebuke. While outwardly inclined to extravagance and to the sacrifice of the rational to the emotional side of preaching, he was kept from pretentiousness and cant by his poignant sense of personal unworthiness and of the wonder of redeeming love. He exalted God until everything pertaining to law, duty and conduct became strangely solemn and momentous. In his exordiums and perorations there was but a step from the sublime to the ridiculous yet he never took it. Dr. W. L. Watkinson, one of our few surviving great preachers, explains this restraint as due to Whitefield's visualization of the reality of sin, the certainty and terror of its retribution, the priesthood of Christ in the forgiveness of sin, and the restoration of the penitent to the favor of God. These themes were the burden of his sermons, which might have been modified in certain respects, but probably at the expense of his influence upon the people. For he was neither a philosopher nor a theologian, but what is more uncommon than either, an evangelist who could quicken the religious spirit of a moribund generation. Nothing is more fatal to the pulpit than a science of homiletics which, like Browning's dying grammarian, speaks its last word to correct minor details, but does not insist upon the most adequate means of presentation. Whitefield's gifts in this respect were unique and cannot be imitated, but his example is admonitory. It reproves those clergymen who mistake restriction for strength, elegance for suitability, and decry the human touch which would give pith

and meaning to their flawless but speedily forgotten homilies. He saw the religious poverty of his era as its divines, thinkers and literati could not perceive it. William Blake's accusation against the prevalent deism,

> "When Satan first the black bow bent
> And the moral Law from the Gospel rent,
> He forged the Law into a sword
> And spilled the blood of Mercy's Lord," [6]

was dramatized by Whitefield's preaching. To him the cry of contrition, the answer of faith, the opened vials of judgment, the horror of the Crucifixion, the triumph of the Resurrection, the glory of the saint, the doom of the sinner, were as real as himself, and his tender appeals and terrific declamations were dictated by their reality.

In America, Whitefield's theological mentor, Jonathan Edwards, blended power in thought with equal power in speech and action. Edwards was a philosopher rather than a theologian, who under different auspices might have developed a metaphysical system comparable with that of Hume or even Kant. But he was confined to a narrow and outworn range of doctrinal speculation in which he exercised the foremost mind our nation can yet claim. He revived the faltering fortunes of a creed conceived under Sinai's shadow rather than in the light of the Incarnation. Despite this displacement of his extraordinary intellectual energies, Edwards was a saint of the purest and tenderest affections, who built his ministry after the pattern in the Mount. Some of the grander principles of Puritanism found their organon in his preaching; it illuminated those fundamentals upon which national morality is based, arousing the godly fear of men and quickening the faith and works of commonwealths. Although his writings are tinged with the natural melancholy of a far-visioned and much misunderstood ambassador of God, they are replete with spiritual verities both subtly suggested and vividly expressed. The vertebræ of our freedom-loving insti-

[6] *Jerusalem Ch.* 11, ll. 71–74.

tutions is related to his teachings, of which the better part was filled with the life blood of a master spirit who dwelt in reason and in righteousness.

The Erskines in Scotland, Herder of Weimar, Lavater of Zurich, Zinzendorf and the Moravians in Central Europe also corrected the religious negligence that characterized the eighteenth century. The ordered goodness and community life of Zinzendorf's sect attracted meditative souls averse to the arid rationalism from which the tranquil mysticism of the Moravian Brethren afforded a welcome shelter. They recalled the eternal consolations of the soul, the sacred havens of its rest, the oft forgotten truths that the meek inherit the earth, and that the spiritual man judges all things. Their importance was ignored by those who prided themselves on an imaginary elevation of reason produced by suppression of the spiritual emotions. The influence of the Moravians must be further measured by their contact with Wesley and other leaders of Christianity. Thereby they injected their experience into the corporate life of the Church and made their testimony of present personal union with Christ the animating factor of more than a hundred years of preaching and missionary effort.

III

It has always been the weary spiritless epochs that have played havoc with the dreams of God's prophets. Such an epoch began when the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century passed into its dogmatic and controversial phases. Forgetful that the highest religious expansion cannot be realized in pure individualism, the exponents of early nineteenth century orthodoxy stressed the personal self, locating in it all the possibilities of human destiny. They pronounced the eternal ruin of those who did not embrace the doctrine of Justification by Faith and held as strongly as did Massillon to the small number of the elect. The High Churchmen of the English Establishment were "fatigued men of the world, if not of yesterday," who could do little more than repeat the

story of their descent from a series of divines which began with Hooker and ended with Waterland. They inculcated with studious moderation a mild sacerdotalism, gave thanks that their skirts were clear of Methodistic enthusiasm, and charged their fellow Churchmen, the Evangelicals, who were the minority party, with fostering a sour pietism which looked upon the best of all possible worlds as a waste howling wilderness overshadowed by impending doom. The antipathy with which the Evangelicals regarded "worldliness" lent color to the accusation. With them it was not so much a reasoned dislike as a state of mind, frequently indicated by a mistaken contempt for the beauty of life, which was not permitted to interfere with their hearty appreciation of life's material comforts. The descendants of the clergymen who had incurred the wrath of Georgian bishops because of their zealous propagandism were found in the fashionable pulpits of London and the provinces, where the more luxuriant forms of social intercourse embarrassed their mission. For while it may be comparatively easy for a prophet in camel's hair to cry Repent! to the promiscuous throngs, one who ministers to fastidious congregations daintily clad needs courage to insist upon that imperative duty. Yet notwithstanding its waning fires, especially in Calvinistic circles, and despite its repudiation of the merits of good works, Evangelicalism conferred upon the race those benefactors and philanthropists who, by their exertions for foreign and domestic missions, the abolition of slavery, the reform of drastic penal codes, and the cleansing of pestilential prisons, offset some of the inhuman conclusions of its eschatology. But the doctors of the party were too deficient in knowledge and sympathy to furnish the controlling thought of the age. Nor would they heed the expostulations of enlightened men, such as Lyman Beecher in America and Samuel Taylor Coleridge in England, who, though totally different in temperament and outlook, were united in their plea for the rescue of doctrinal propositions from their root-and-branch defenders, in order that they might receive a place proportion-

ate to their importance in the entire body of Christian truth and in the moral affection of mankind.

It was continental Europe that provided the scientific method for the re-interpretation of the Gospel and its relationships to God and man which has been the guide of modern preaching. While Wesley's gallant regiments of Arminianism were storming the citadels of Calvinism in the eastern section of the American Republic and covering its western frontier with hardy pioneers of the Kingdom of God, the great German thinker and preacher Schleiermacher became the prophet of another dispensation of grace and truth, which effected far-reaching changes and ended the claim of the Evangelicals to be the sole depositories of God's purposes, with a dialect of their own and an icy attitude toward outsiders. Their painful literalism and harsh insistence upon the details of an endless perdition were gradually replaced by more merciful and elastic beliefs. This emancipating process is not yet complete, and during its operation many who gratefully acknowledged their indebtedness to Evangelicalism were alienated from it, and sought relief either in more liberal forms of Christianity or in the intellectual narcotic of doubt. The infiltrations of German scholarship into the conditions described were discernible in Coleridge, Archbishop Whately, Dean Milman, Thomas Arnold, and Connop Thirlwall, the most judicial and public minded Anglican prelate of his century. Their more critical examination of original sources bore fruit in 1829, when Milman issued his *History of the Jews,* a work at least fifty years in advance of the time. It was the first decisive inroad of German theology into England, which later found an entrance in our own land: the first palpable indication that the Bible could be treated like any other book. If the Church had listened to Milman's plea and entrusted herself to the guidance of the Eternal Spirit of all truth, to Whom the Scriptures bear a faithful witness, Protestantism would have been saved from many useless vexations.

Schleiermacher plunged into the depths of religious think-

ing and evolved a theology of his own, which can scarcely be appreciated without reference to his personal history. His early contact with the Moravians imbued him with an ardent faith for which, after a season of disquiet and almost despair, he endeavored to find an adequate theory. Possessed of extraordinary talents and versatile accomplishments and spurred to his self-assigned task by the spiritual distress he had endured, he rejected Catholic and Protestant scholasticism alike and reconstructed his Christian system under the aegis of the philosophies of Plato, Spinoza, Kant and Schelling.[7] His celebrated volume *Speeches on Religion,* which appeared in 1799, contained the substance of his teaching, and is now more frequently studied than at any previous time. Its intensive subjectivity revealed a characteristic limitation of the Teutonic mind. Yet not a few of the happiest abstractions of the scholar were therein blended with the fervent aspirations of the saint, and what the work lacked in perspective was partly compensated for by its mystic and humanistic tone. The author penetrated to the core of the issues he discussed, and aroused emotions which in turn originated a series of reflections concerning the significance of the individual and the functions of intuition. He urged that all life was a revelation of the Universe as a compact unified whole, and he worshiped Christ as the living center of this cosmic unity. The truly divine element of our Lord's nature was found, he asserted, not in the purity of His moral Teaching, nor in the individuality of His character, but in "the glorious clearness to which the great idea He came to exhibit attained in His soul."[8] This idea was that all which is finite requires a higher mediation to be in accord with Deity, and that for man under the power of the finite and particular, and all too ready to imagine the Divine itself in this form, salvation is only to be found in a mediative redemption. He further contended that the divine life in man resided in the emotions and was as care-

[7] Schleiermacher had the receptivity of a great eclectic combined with the reconstructive power of a profoundly original thinker.

[8] *Speeches on Religion,* p. 246.

fully separated from dogmatic authority as it was from ethical precepts. Religion thus became independent and supreme as an ineffable communion between the heart and its Maker, and vindicated for itself its own sphere and its own character. The relation of theology to philosophy or science was neither one of dependence nor opposition but of complete freedom, distinct functions and ultimate harmony. When religion had raised itself beside all knowledge, the whole field was for the first time completely filled and human nature perfected. This reasoning transferred spiritual things from metaphysics to psychology and based their authority upon the attested experiences of the devout. Outward standards could not bind the religious man within whose breast and nowhere else the Divine law registered its absolute decrees. Hence Christian believers were forever delivered from their fear of the changes which attend the expansion of knowledge, and need be under no obligation to employ apologetic methods, which, though stifling doubt, failed to reach the truth. Unhistorical legends of ecclesiastical and Biblical infallibility were superfluous accretions. A true zeal for the redemptive revelation was Christocentric; its living verities were to be exalted for their own sake, in full sympathy with but apart from the results of organized knowledge. Theology, therefore, was not speculative, but expressive; its subject matter consisted of the facts of Christian consciousness, and its function was to enumerate these without regard to the problems of philosophy or the discoveries of physical science.

These mystical interpretations of idealism were interwoven with the preëminence of Christ as the Mediator of the Divine Immanence and with the principle of the fellowship of believers in the life of faith. The growth of the Church as God's visible witness in the world was not institutional, still less hierarchical, but consisted in the expanding congregation of faithful souls in whose solidarity the indwelling Spirit administered one life and communion. Surely the unconfined religious feelings have not received a more vigorous and ordered expression than that of Schleiermacher. But it came

to its boundaries and occasionally trespassed beyond them. The tendency to confuse Christian experience with types of fantastic mysticism and to set it in contrast to thought was not sufficiently governed by the consideration that feeling is really a form of thought, and that will, in its last analysis, is "thought assuming control of reality." Yet, as I have said, to the German divine belongs the signal honor of giving to Christian theology release from its undue subjection to rival branches of learning and an incontestable supremacy of its own. Directly or indirectly, he left a lasting impression upon the Church at large. Even those who rightly declare that he often awakened sentiments he could not satisfy and that his prejudice in behalf of aristocratic and polite society induced him to reserve his teachings for the cultured classes, concede the benefit of his opposition to the idea that a changeless order is the culmination of wisdom in matters of faith. Schleiermacher was followed by worthy successors belonging to his mediating school, who continued the task of turning the drift from rationalistic to emotional channels. Among these were Nitzsch, the most prominent; Krummacher, poetic and dramatic; Luthardt, logical and impressionistic; Marheineke, idealistic and scientific; Müller, theological and Biblical; Ullman, æsthetic and mystical; Rothe, intellectual and ethical; and last but not least, Tholuck, a preacher distinguished for evangelical fervor, ethical perception and practical effectiveness, and almost as well known outside Germany as Schleiermacher. The Ritschlian group prosecuted the work of reconciling and harmonizing historical Christianity with the modern mind, and its representatives have greatly enriched the study of theology, Church history and Scriptural interpretation. Although the German pulpit is too effusive in sentimentalism and too prone to subjectivity, the patient research and insistence of German scholarship upon the primacy of origins have been controlling factors of the sacred science since Scheiermacher's day.

A greater contrast to the main features of the modern German pulpit than that which French preaching furnishes can-

not easily be conceived. Our Gallican brethren have always been noted for oratorical flights, fervid persuasiveness, grace and brilliance of diction, and this notwithstanding that two of the most penetrating and powerful thinkers of Christian history, Calvin and Pascal, were Frenchmen. Lacordaire was conspicuous among the pulpit orators of the Roman Catholic Church of the preceding century, and his "Conferences" at Nôtre Dame in Paris drew multitudes who were profoundly moved. Dupanloup was a second prominent preacher whose sermons had dignity of utterance varied by occasional flashes. Didon, though a lesser star, shone brightly in the Madeleine, and his discourses there were among the religious events of his time. Père Hyacinthe possessed unusual speaking powers, his frank use of which was penalized by his excommunication. The Protestant pulpit was adorned by such preachers as the scholarly and spiritual Vinet, the Church historian D'Aubigné, best known as a writer but not less reputable as a forcible preacher, and Adolphe Monod, who won his hearers by the appeal of his character, his refined thought, beautiful style and affectionate earnestness.

Your interest in the continental pulpit is perhaps only casual, and I have referred but to a few of its occupants whose influence has been felt within select circles in English-speaking lands. When we extend our survey to include the foremost preachers of the American Republic and the British Dominions their great number and excellence forbid adequate comment. One would like to mention them all, from the ranks of the departed and the living alike, but this is not feasible, and we must adhere to the selective principle previously observed, which confines us to the notable exemplars of the Christian ambassadorship of the nineteenth century who are no longer with us.

The seven American clergymen whose preëminent service swept beyond sectarian boundaries were Lyman Beecher, William Ellery Channing, Horace Bushnell, Charles G. Finney, Matthew Simpson, Henry Ward Beecher and Phillips Brooks. The list could be indefinitely extended, and probably compe-

tent judges will regard it as too partial, but these names have not been chosen without reflection, and they are recorded here that you may study the biographies of the men they represent and find the references of a grateful Church to their memories, methods, ways of thought and work. Do not be deterred from doing this by that distrust of experts which characterizes Americans in every walk of life. Turn from the lesser breeds of preachers who know not the law of your vocation to these exemplars who knew and fulfilled it. For in preaching, as in much else, presumption backed by inexperience is often a passport to preferment, and ignorance a title to self-respect.[9] The anomalies created by such prejudices and also by those due to sectarian narrowness should not confuse your vocational estimates, nor prevent you from following hard after the best representatives of sacred discourse.

The elder Beecher's fame has been somewhat eclipsed by that of his son, whom he scarcely equaled in sermonic ingenuity or transcendent speech, but surpassed in theological lore and dialectical vigor. His war on drink and duelling and his plea for the modification of Calvinistic theories of human redemption were the militant elements of a Mr. Valiant-for-Truth whose wider ministry was national in its character and influence. The courage, resourcefulness and literary endowments of his distinguished children were derived from their father, who became the head and front of the practicable liberalism of his Church and of the aggressive Christianity of his time. William Ellery Channing was the outspoken protagonist of religious freedom, whose lucid definitions of the Fatherhood of God and the Humanity of Christ are now the common property of preaching. He maintained the rights of conscience in questions of religious belief, over which ultra-orthodoxy had attempted a reign of proscription. His prophetic consciousness remained unchilled by the frigid intellectualities of his sect; and from his writings and those of Dr. James Martineau the majority of reading men have ob-

[9] Francis G. Peabody: *The Religious Education of An American Citizen*, p. 110.

tained their current ideas of spiritual Unitarianism. Horace Bushnell re-asserted for himself and eventually for Protestant thinking everywhere, the depth, breadth and reality of the soul's contact with God. His originality and initiative were symbolized by the continental expanse of the New World, and one is at a loss to know which was most admirable, the wide range or the intensity of his ministerial interests. They embraced well-nigh every social and religious problem and touched nothing, however commonplace, which they did not elevate. His preaching was always essentially prophetic, the product of life, thought and knowledge harmoniously interwoven, full of unexpectedness and of the advantages of an audacity that only the strong and well-furnished man can safely indulge. The very titles of his sermons are often minor theses; their subject matter abounds in affirmations that cannot be gainsaid. The word of the Lord in Bushnell's mouth was the inspired and resistless communication to his people of saving realities applicable to the whole of existence, conceived afresh by an opulent mind, and uttered out of a pure and flaming heart. Charles G. Finney was of a wholly different type from Bushnell and from any other preacher of pronounced evangelistic tendencies except John Wesley. His activities as a preacher were simultaneous with those of his presidency of Oberlin College, and this union of duties bespoke in him the scholarly temperament and spiritual ardor which found full play in his ministry. He brought to the pulpit a judicial accent and legal persistency too seldom found in hortatory discourse. His outwardly calm, progressive argument and the restraint which lent force to his appeal, broke down objection, dispelled doubt and compelled the surrender of many of his prominent contemporaries to Christ. Such preaching implies that the permanent effects of evangelistic exhortation are secured by invoking the reason as well as the emotions.

That seraphic son of Wesleyanism, Matthew Simpson, was not so profound in scholarship as John McClintock, nor so sublime on occasion as Randolph S. Foster, nor so distinctively

oratorical as John P. Durbin, nor so mystical as Bishop Marvin, nor so profoundly Pauline in his theology as Bishop Alpheus W. Wilson. But for unaffected manliness and Biblical simplicity, depth of feeling and a quiet thrust of moral and spiritual sentiment—qualities which in Simpson were entirely unhampered by the critical faculty, and which at intervals received an amazing charisma from above—the great Methodist episcopos had no superior. He ministered to the highest and the lowliest through the Church of his choice, and above all to his brethren, the preachers, who looked upon him as their Apollos. Through them as media he helped to shape the destinies of this democracy, and was one of its influential voices audible above the tumult of the Civil War. To have heard him at certain seasons of his earlier ministry, when the glory of the Lord shone round about him and the power of God rested visibly upon him, until he himself feared to enter further into divine mysteries and actually desisted from preaching, was for thousands of clergymen whom he had to send forth to hard and sacrificial toil a divine revelation through the spoken Word, which armed them for the holy fray.

Henry Ward Beecher's Shakespearian imagination was shown in all its regal might both in the pulpit and upon the platform. Competent authorities rank him as the first preacher of his century; I venture to go further and place him at the summit of the sacred oratory of the last two hundred years. His sermons and speeches exhibit a larger knowledge of human nature, a clearer induction of the things which men have in common, and a more sterling rectitude of utterance than are found in most modern preachers. His clear vision, passionate devotion, dramatic visualization, versatility, pathos, humor and emotional range enabled him, after throwing off the incubus of a burdensome traditionalism, to stand out as the supreme prophet of Christianity for the generation he drew to his feet and served so incomparably. A stalwart physical frame, utmost facility of expression, free play of consummate genius, and easy naturalness of manner are sel-

dom found in any single individual. Yet Beecher owned them all, undeflected by any eccentricities. He arrayed and manœuvered beneath his practiced control more native talents for preaching than other gifted speakers could even muster. The animating impulses of his candid and sanguine disposition were a safer guide for him than an erudition to which he laid no claim. His sense of propriety and of the proportion of truth guarded his fervid denunciations, appraisals and appeals from excess. So alert were his receptive and inventive faculties that they fed while he spoke, causing him to browse on his audiences as other preachers browse in books. He gathered from the common life of the people the provision with which he replenished their rejoicing souls on the Lord's Day. His magnetic affinity for all ranks and conditions of men and for the events of his time invested his pulpit ministry with an international significance. He was indeed a very great preacher, if for this reason alone, that he had a truly creative faculty. A sermon by him leaves an absolutely definite impression on the mind, as well as the conviction that this particular impression had never been made before—a new thing had been given to the world. To eulogize him further would be superfluous: to analyze him completely is impossible; he does not serve as a model for any other man, but as a perpetual source of strength and inspiration for us all. There were spots in his sun, but it was a sun, radiating everywhere the light of sacred love and the warmth of Evangelical truth.

Phillips Brooks excelled in the catholicity of his humanity, which belonged to him by right of birth, for he was the nearly perfect fruitage of nine generations of cultured Puritan stock. In reading his biography by Professor Allen, a book which should be among the select volumes of your library, one is reminded of his parallel with Milton's earlier phase, in which the winsomeness and grace of the Cavalier blended with the intellectual masculinity and scholarship of the Puritan. Milton's resolve to return to "fresh woods and pastures new" was never fulfilled because his muse turned sadly from the

trampled swards of Marston Moor and Naseby. But the geniality, the optimism, the unfaltering faith which characterized Brooks were not diminished by the Civil War nor other tragical events. His preaching genius never looked back and seldom turned within itself to sadly meditate; to the last it struck the note of Christian confidence and fellowship which echoes to the doom. Baptized a Unitarian, he was doubtless influenced by the intellectual freedom and ethical conviction of Unitarianism. Trained in the Protestant Episcopal Church of which he afterwards became a bishop, even its broadest section was almost too constricted for his spiritual dimensions. The ideal of a sainthood consolidated by liturgical and canonical practice was subordinated by him to the greater sanctity of the universal kingdom. He disliked the abstract and the philosophical, and foraged everywhere for the humanities of which he became a genuine apostle.

Perhaps you have felt the historical part of these first two chapters somewhat wearisome, yet they are partly vindicated by the example of Brooks. He made no special mark in technical theology, but he thoroughly studied the Fathers, the classical dramatists, the English literature of the eighteenth century and the Victorian period, and the personalities of famous men. Like Dickens, he loved the city better than the country, and was at his best when grappling with the problems of community life and with the exigent religious needs of souls who had light enough for sight but not for their adventures in faith. His Boston ministry was made memorable by his clear interpretations of the hidden man of the heart, which, in turn, were made possible by his embodiment of the highest humanity in the heart of God. He loved men as he viewed them in God, but he also had the greater love which saw God in man. It is not strange that Lincoln should have been his mentor, nor that his synthesis of the intellectual, ethical and spiritual elements of life in Jesus Christ should have caused him to preach the Redeemer as the great Comrade of the race.

IV

Let us here briefly mention the careers of Thomas Chalmers, Robert Hall, John Henry Newman, Frederick W. Robertson, Robert William Dale, Charles Haddon Spurgeon and Alexander MacLaren. Chalmers was the primate of a preaching ministry which has maintained the highest average in the world. One of nature's noblemen, with a warrior-like grandeur and an eager strength, he united boldness with caution, fervor with circumspection, love of the Evangel with love of learning, and was qualified in every particular to complete the work of Knox by leading the disruption which founded the Free Church of Scotland. Gilfillan praised him as the divine of his age, and said that after he had ended one of his tremendous discourses, the rapt expression upon his hearers' faces showed that though the wind had gone down the sea still ran high. Robert Hall was renowned for a stately and ornate style which has passed out of fashion. We are assured that the perorations of this school of preaching are archaic and its sonorous periods outgrown. Nevertheless, it once clothed a philosophical treatment of Biblical themes, and should be of interest to you because it commanded wide commendation at a time when the pulpit was the chief center of public instruction. John Henry Newman's meditations upon the ever widening opposition, as he supposed, between the Church and the world, found an outlet in the sermons which he delivered at St. Mary's, Oxford, in 1829. They enforced his contention that things could not stand as they were, that Christ's Church was indestructible, that she must rise again and flourish, when the poor creatures of a day who opposed her had crumbled into dust. As a preacher he was profoundly conscious of the sacredness of his vocation, and in its fulfillment was unequaled by any ecclesiastic of his day. Pusey, saint and recluse, whose personality for a time overshadowed Anglicanism, Mozley, the deepest and clearest thinker of the Oxford group; Manning, self-conscious, politic, facile of speech; Liddon, with the Italianate profile, orator and ascetic; were all preachers of a

high quality. But none approached Newman in his analysis of the human spirit, his exquisite English, his tender if indignant fervor. He united simple earnestness and refinement with a sense of reserved power on the verge of being released. "His hearers felt," said Principal Shairp, "as though one of the earlier Fathers had returned to earth." He appealed to them with sustained directness, force and earnestness for a lofty spiritual standard to be seriously realized in conduct, the more imperative because the nation had come to the brink of religious dissolution, and was resting complacently in its own pride and might while divine judgment impended. None can feel the full power of Newman's greatest sermons who does not trace them to their sources in the Fathers. And if nothing in them showed his comparative youth and inexperience, or immaturity of treatment, it was because he could re-clothe the ancient creeds and confessions with the beauty and the strength of genuine sacred oratory. His homilies were not, as partisans have alleged, mere wizardries of words, but poems; transcripts from the most inspired souls, as well as from the souls to which they ministered; reasonings in an ethereal dialectic, views of life, of goodness, of sin and its malefic consequences, which should be carefully separated from Newman's incapacitating traditionalism and adroit periphrases in behalf of sacerdotalism. Not only in university pulpits, but in those of rural churches he could employ a spiritual perception and a simple diction which held village rustics spellbound. Not as an Evangelical, an Anglican, a Tractarian, nor as a prince of the Roman Catholic Church but as a spiritual seer insatiate in his search for God, Newman transcended the various phases of his strange career. The sweeping changes of his mind and circumstance brought him little satisfaction. After he had renounced things he dearly loved and proved "How salt the savor is of other's bread," his religious philosophizings were his consolation. They are found in all his writings aglow with the Divine fire, of which some preaching that denounced him had not the feeblest spark.

Few ministers have realized the ideal of the Christian preacher more fully than did Robertson of Brighton, who has attained a posthumous eminence unprecedented in the annals of the modern pulpit. The best and noblest spirits have found him a guide "amid the chances and changes of this mortal life," and many souls resort to his published sermons when storm-tossed by inward contentions and fears. A strain of disillusion and disappointment ran through his life and made his faith the more vividly realistic. He was too reserved, too critical, perhaps too sensitive. Yet this is measurably explained by the neglect he experienced. He was not, as Bishop Hensley Henson has remarked, the child of fortune; no patron smiled on him; their honors and emoluments were bestowed on lesser clerics who are now forgotten. He sought no interest in any party when partisanship was necessary to promotion. He died while still young, yet he had so lived and preached as to spread the Gospel in widest commonalty. At heart a soldier, he injected into his ministry some of the virtues of that profession. His views were colored by his military preferences, by his ardent longings for his country's safety; and he was wont to say that to meet death in a righteous cause was the most enviable of fates. Robertson saw in the manhood of his Master, in His Teaching, His Offering, His Resurrection, the essence of the mind and purpose of God toward all men. His was a lone star of singular brilliance. Penetration, insight, exegetical discernment, courageous earnestness, finished culture, were welded together in his preaching by the fervor of his spirituality, giving it not only prophetic rank but that of literature.

Robert William Dale, of Birmingham, England, believed preaching to be the loftiest vocation vouchsafed to man and would have regarded a seat in the British Cabinet as a descent from Carr's Lane pulpit. Upon this ideal he lavished talents that excited the liveliest hopes of his friends and the increase of a learning gained by unrelaxing labors, in which he persisted when he stood at the summit of his calling and unto the end of his career. His characteristically English person-

ality, matured by his contact with multiform interests, dominated the best minds of his day. The ministry he exercised, disengaged from the petty and the temporary, developed a gravity which drew to itself the souls within its wide radius. His example ratifies much which I have tried to say, and is the more contagious because he looked upon Christian culture with an inclusive eye. For him it was a grace of the heart as truly as of the intellect, the coördination of all ideas and sentiments that enforce the teachings of the Gospel upon human nature and human institutions. Fixed from his youth in the Evangelical Faith, he felt free to combine with his private and ministerial devotions the public service which creates or widens opportunities for preaching. He was at his best in the study and the sanctuary as an interpreter of the doctrines of Divine love and justice. But the platform which knew John Bright's transforming presence as the greatest lay preacher who has appeared in modern politics, was also Dale's chosen sphere. There he extolled righteousness, denounced the false gods of democracy, rebuked leaders of the State, who, he felt, were inimical to its larger welfare, and raised national life to higher levels. The breadth of his ambassadorship has been criticized, but its scope was entirely harmonious with its depth and vitality. He saw earthly affairs in the light of the Eternal and pitied the ignorance and deprivation of the people who suffer and toil, in whom he perceived the possibilities of a renewed common weal and the promise of a better day.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon and John Henry Newman were alike in nothing else except the dogmatic concentration of their efforts upon two widely variant types of faith. The one lived to exalt the Church, the other the Puritan conception of the Gospel. Spurgeon's provincialism, literalistic interpretations of the Bible and intolerant theological temper have been singled out for just criticism, but he had no equal for evangelical power, pathos and persuasiveness. It is one of the marvels of the pulpit that his sermons still continue to appear weekly and have a wide circulation in all the

churches. His melodious voice, intimate acquaintance with the average mind, expansive popular sympathy, knowledge of the Scriptures and of the seventeenth century divines, absolute certitude of statement, and racy speech, reminiscent of Latimer and Bunyan, constituted him one of the pulpit princes of his time, and it adds greatly to his fame that the common people heard him gladly.

Alexander MacLaren was the eminent expository preacher of the century, whose exegetical sermons, based on the sound learning of the Cambridge School of divines, have been read and appreciated in every English-speaking land. Not a few clergymen would allot to him the elevation given to Beecher, and for lovers of the Bible he will always have meritorious qualities. He was most widely known as a preacher and commentator, but he was also a clear thinker, a master of metaphor and allusion and an observant and a meditative although somewhat austere and isolated spirit.

I have only touched the fringe of this history, and probably you feel, after so fragmentary a review, as though you have been hurried through the galleries of the Louvre with opportunity for no more than a casual glance at their many masterpieces. The evangelical eloquence of Charles Simeon, the Ossianic flights of the brilliant but erratic Edward Irving, the simple manliness of William Jay, the unequaled missionary discourses of Richard Watson, the towering strength of Thomas Binney, the statesman-like pleadings of Jabez Bunting, the fervid piety of John Angell James, the restrained intensity of James Parsons of York, the graceful dexterity of Bishop Wilberforce, the qualities in Archbishop Magee which made Henry Parry Liddon award to him the crown many had bestowed upon Liddon himself, as the greatest living preacher, suggest to you other galleries hung with speaking likenesses of men among whom you can profitably linger. They were not rhetoricians who vainly attempt to "draw nectar through a sieve," nor disputants whose barren polemics disfigure the message of peace and reconciliation. Some of them were cherished exemplars of the moralist and the man of letters

as well as of the preacher. Others were witnesses against one age and precursors of another; advocates of the poor in defiance of oppression, of liberty in an era of arbitrary power, of the human virtues and sacred precepts of the Gospel among worldlings who sacrificed these to carnal motives and aims. The interpretations of the Kingdom of Heaven by Frederick Denison Maurice, and those of the Johannine Gospel by Brooke Foss Westcott, are full of the instinctive perception of genuine spirituality. Dr. James Martineau is doubtless known to you as a religious philosopher, but he was also an ascensive preacher, never popular, always influential among not a few thinkers and leaders whom he conveyed into the higher realms of sacred feeling and ethical reasoning. Hugh Price Hughes had the Celtic fire of Wales, the province of poet-preachers, who kept everything alive until his laborious work of re-animating world Methodism and the social conscience of the Free Churches came to its sudden yet glorious end. Joseph Parker did not always make accent do duty for thought, nor dramatic emphasis for originality. Once he forgot himself, he became, beyond question, one of the greatest pulpit luminaries in England, whose City Temple was a sanctuary for modern prophecy. He had lineaments difficult to depict, which in their romantic exuberance sometimes went beyond the recognized province of the homiletical art, but his copious faculties for expression compelled an Empire to listen to him.

Turn to Scotland once more and recall Thomas Guthrie, one of the first clergymen of the early Victorian period to hear and heed the cry of the city's submerged masses; John Cairns, who searched the lives of men with the candle of the Lord; McLeod Campbell, whose volume on the Atonement was a valuable contribution to esoteric theology; Murray McCheyne, a guileless and seraphic spirit; John Caird, the recognized pulpit thinker of a people metaphysical by instinct; Principal A. M. Fairbairn, of astonishing erudition and equal ardor; George Matheson, whose blindness helped to make him a seer and a singer of the Church; Principal Tulloch, the

master of ecclesiastical assemblies, and Principal Rainy, who fashioned their policies. These were valiant sons of God from across the border; from the land of Duff, Moffat, Livingstone, Chalmers, Morrison, missionaries of the Cross to many lands. I have said nothing of such American preachers as Richard Salter Storrs, whose ornate sermons were nurtured by his study of the Fathers and the Schoolmen; of A. J. F. Behrends, whose force of thought and expression was consecrated to the defense of the Faith; of William M. Taylor, perhaps the foremost preacher of New York City thirty years ago; nothing of the great array of present active preachers, whose ranks you should be proud to join.

The large majority of the clergy in the periods indicated did not aspire to be heard in the great congregation, nor expect to raise their voices on any hill of Mars. They were employed in obscure spheres far from the crowded scenes of human traffic. Yet what a preferable lot was theirs, who, disdainful of material wealth and honors, devoted themselves to the highest service. Be worthy of all the glorious company, for whenever you enter the pulpit you are encompassed about by this great cloud of witnesses. They, the spiritual mentors of the ages, taught their fellows that righteousness exalts the nations and Divine Love redeems the race, turning men from the grossest degradation to belief in God and obedience to His commands. Among them you discern creators and rulers of states, architects of justice and freedom, evangelists to heathen tribes, regulators of society, builders of seats of learning, ambassadors to the world at large. The deepest problems of earthly speculation were not more than difficult trifles in their estimation, unless they led men to Him in Whom is the fulfillment not only of reason but of that which is forever beyond reason—the Will of the Everlasting Father.

Memory frequently tells a tale as flattering as that of hope, and few things appear in its teeming retrospects which justify your optimism more than does the history of preaching as the shaping force of enduring civilization. Where can you

reap so plentiful a harvest as in this succession of lives divinely appointed, with hearts to feel, brains to conceive and wills to execute the rescue of the broken and the desolate? They saw what kings and prophets desired to see but had not seen. They followed the banner of the Son of God, the Saviour of the World; and although everywhere and always you will be amongst the living, the fellowship of other presences, some dim, some shining, will govern your movements and shape your message. Behind the people you will perceive the publicist; behind the publicist, the political philosopher; behind the political philosopher, the metaphysician; and behind them all inspired seers of Christianity, the sources of your soul's courage and devotion, of new faith, of unfathomed strength, of exhaustless consolation. You can classify them empirically as intellectual preachers, or dogmatic, didactic, hortatory, theological, evangelical; what you will. But the arrangement is unscientific and misleading. For many of them, and among these, the best, surmounted such artificial limitations, and blended the characteristics of the types I have named in their individual ministry. Their true ground of unity, which is also their rationale, is found in the Absoluteness of Jesus. Pontiffs, Fathers, Schoolmen, Mediævalists, Reformers and Modernists are an inseparable whole in the Preëminent One. He guarantees their legitimacy and also your communion with Himself and them. From Him the charter of all genuinely Christian preaching is derived; and since no spirit shines by its own radiance, and none transmits more light than it can receive, the illumination these prophets and preachers diffused throughout the ages must be ascribed to their reflection of the glory of the Son of God. Where that illumination has been distorted by intellectual vagaries, or refracted through the prism of an overweening culture, or darkened by prejudice and ignorance, the obscurations can usually be traced to unfaith rather than to faith, to a bewildering distrust in the sufficiency of Christ as the Light of the World. Forever one in Him and in the

Divine embassy from which ecclesiastical divisions cannot separate you, realize your oneness by the renunciation of your lower selves and by your consistent devotion to the Lord of all life.

CHAPTER III

THE MODERN ATTITUDE TOWARD PREACHING

I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables. But be thou sober in all things, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill thy ministry.

II Timothy iv: 1–5.

CHAPTER III

THE MODERN ATTITUDE TOWARD PREACHING

Waning influence of the pulpit—Alleged causes—Main causes found in the intellectual and social movements of the nineteenth century—Darwin's evolutionary hypothesis—Theological opposition—Theories of social reform—Ecclesiastical apathy—Resentment of the workers—Efforts of Maurice and Kingsley—The Church and Social questions—Signs of an awakening—The preacher and economic theories.

How fares it with the pulpit to-day? According to its censors preaching for the last two decades has had a steadily waning career. We are assured that the days are gone when great preachers, like great writers, were reverenced at every fireside. Scarcely a week elapses in which we are not told the center of moral authority is no longer in the pulpit, that the vital spark is not kindled there. The reasons assigned for this alleged decadence, however, are not consistent. One group of critics attributes it to want of grasp upon the fundamentals of the Christian message. Given, they urge, a succession of clergymen intent upon these fundamentals to the exclusion of inferior matters and the acceptance of their presentation is assured. In this connection it is interesting to observe the manner in which those who think themselves wiser than the rest of the religious world fall into snares that simple good sense avoids. Take some of these critics at their proper valuation and you discover that their knowledge of theology is limited to a few well-worn phrases or familiar formulas, which they substitute for the grand dimensions and interpretations of the Christian Revelation. Their attainments, in given instances, suffice to raise them from the insignificance of stupidity to the dignity of boredom. On the

other hand there are, as we know, many well-intentioned men and women holding similar views, who have really read and thought much, but whose reading and thinking have been almost entirely confined to a single type of Christian teaching and to one class of pulpit themes. Consequently, though having an acquaintance with these subjects, they are by no means so well qualified to judge of a great system like the Gospel as those who have taken a larger view of its history, literature, methods, aims and the interplay of its vital power.

Another group of idealists, deeply stirred by the unfair treatment so often meted out to the pulpit, declares that the people at large have no appetite for the spiritual verities preaching presupposes and with which it deals. The impression retained by this group is that so far from there being a hunger for the pure food of the Gospel, the majority of people are perfectly contented with the fleshpots of the Egypt of material opulence to which they are addicted. The sacred institutions and truths with which the preacher is associated and which have been identified with every phase of human betterment for the last two thousand years, are indeed esteemed and loved by a faithful minority, but that minority contends that an untoward generation looks upon those institutions and truths with indifference. As this despairing remnant sees the situation there is nothing left for you to do but to bear your witness in an irresponsive age and thus preserve the permanent witness of the Church to the Faith.

The cause of this untoward condition is found by these pessimistic friends in the material prosperity of the times. True, there has been a remarkable general increase in this world's goods, and nearly everybody is better informed to-day concerning matters conducive to temporal welfare. But it has not been demonstrated that temporal welfare is intrinsically unfavorable to the Gospel, which is preached to the poor not to keep them poor but to elevate their lot to accepted standards of decency and comfort. What has played a greater part in that elevation than Christianity? Communities and nations which have assimilated even to a slight

extent the teaching and spirit of the New Testament have become endowed with the knowledge, stability, thrift and diligence essential to the production and distribution of wealth. It would seem illogical, therefore, to assert that these teachings are impotent to control the substantial benefits they so largely help to create. Thinkers who ignore this consideration and assail without qualification the rapid growth of wealth are liable to miss the mark. Mammonism is rightly condemned for its gross abuse of riches, but the condemnation does not warrant the inference that wealth is unlawful or that Christianity is of moment only in adversity, an ascetic creed which adjusts itself most readily to the poverty stricken and the socially inefficient. The antagonisms which retard religious progress and prevent the liberty of prophecy exist not between the Evangel of Jesus and the mere ownership of extensive possessions, but between that Evangel and those spurious ideals of life which vitiate wealth, poverty, morals, politics and everything else they infect. Unsparingly oppose every false motive and pursuit which cannot be dedicated to the service of God, but do not fall into the error of supposing that you aid that service by fulminating against the wealth which is an inevitable outcome of a strong and intelligent civilization.

The accusation is reiterated that ours is an era of hardness of heart and unbelief which has turned traitor in the conflict between good and evil, but the evidence adduced to sustain so serious a charge is by no means entirely admissible when viewed either from the standpoint of philosophy or experience. Faith is a universal and continuous factor, and righteousness is the ultimate goal of the race. You may meet those who are without hope, compassion, or love, but you will find it exceedingly difficult to discover a human being without faith. Men have to believe in order not to believe, and when they avow their skepticism they only recite their creed. No crisis can destroy faith until it first destroys humanity; no imaginable assault can obliterate the trust which is an indivisible quantity in every rational being. The crucial point

is not that men shall believe, which they do by nature, but what they shall believe and with what proportion and emphasis. They need the Eternal Objectives upon which faith can securely rest, which fulfill its highest aspirations and requite its confidence with regenerative power. The preacher has to satisfy this need with an authorized message devoid of theological traditions which antagonize benevolent instincts or the dictates of conscience and reason. Have sympathy and respect for these modest stipulations of a religious mind, which ecclesiastics of a sort have not always understood, a mind extensively perceptible and in innumerable instances clarified by reverent reflection.

Aloofness from the pulpit has been traced by not a few observers to the rationalistic proclivities of the age, and by others to its sacerdotal susceptibilities. As against these attributions we are reminded that rationalism spurs intellectual interest in religion and that sacerdotalism inspires pious energy and zeal. But though they achieve these results among a small minority, it has been pertinently remarked that for the majority of outsiders whom we desire to reach, rationalism minifies the unseen realities which religion presses and sacerdotalism is too mechanical to appeal to a host of meditative spirits. It is possible, however, to overestimate the importance of these conclusions, since the pulpit has less to fear from the opposition of what is loosely called rationalism than from the hypocrisy and weakness of professed Christians, and it is also notable that audiences consisting of extreme sacramentarians usually exhibit marked devotion and listen eagerly to the spoken Word. Undoubtedly there is a measure of truth in the various reasons assigned for the neglect of preaching, and you do not have to concede their complete validity to benefit by them. Yet the ministerial mind, tranquilly dependent upon the certitudes it knows, can afford to remain patient when confronted with opposing elements, and be averse to rash conjecture as to insolent rejoinder. Exaggerations, errors, wrong advices, are obvious enough in accounting for the diminished sway of the pulpit.

Nevertheless, criticism has enforced upon preaching a more practical charity, a larger knowledge of truth as truth and the confession that it dwells in multitudinous forms. Individuals who prefer hypnotic enthusiasm to psychological analysis and who manipulate the emotions while they disparage the intellect are not likely to agree with this conclusion, but you will find in your audiences those who do agree with it, who look upon Christianity as the science as well as the practice of godliness, and who welcome the frank and fearless inquiries which pave the way for its more thorough and studious advocacy.

Enough has been said to suggest that those who fix a near sighted gaze upon the shallower streams of present tendencies in religion are not able to discern the deeper drifts. Below these surface agitations runs the current of a profoundly spiritual faith to which the prophetic function of the Church should be addressed in just and fruitful ways. Nor is there very much which is new in the prejudices and misapprehensions unfavorable to your calling. In reviewing such matters, many of which are of the commonest observation, you do not navigate uncharted waters dangerously rife with reef and shoal, in which there are no openings, no broad expanses, for the fullest exercise of the preaching office. On the contrary, these abound and the single motived servant of God need never be at a loss to find them. The recession from the pulpit is often exaggerated by those who take counsel of their fears. An incalculable number of earnest and devout men and women still look to preaching for light and guidance, and you have to make certain that they do not look in vain. Their reciprocal influence upon the ministry of the Gospel is immeasurable in extent and beneficial beyond words. Keep it ever before you through this survey and recall the fact that those who gratefully appreciate preaching, as the chosen agency for the propaganda of the Church, are the moral leaven of every community. Their fidelity to the New Testament Faith is a source of the liveliest hope and encouragement. In the spirit they stimulate we should study the causes which have

separated the pulpit from the people, and which, whether near or remote, will have to be examined rather than denounced in order that a correct diagnosis may hasten their removal.

Having glanced at the more usual explanations of the diminished prominence of the pulpit, I hasten to add that the recent war has been drawn upon all too freely in their behalf. The evolution of human life has seldom been less spasmodic than during the period preceding the war. The material and moral changes which characterized that period were an ordered process; their results, both sweet and bitter, have interpenetrated life, and their interpretations by competent authorities have molded our thinking. To go no farther back than the near antiquity of 1859, when Darwin published his *Origin of Species*, and forward to the present time, the annals of Europe and America have been distinguished by a series of remarkable names and achievements in every department of knowledge and imagination,—art, literature, science, philosophy, sociology, theology, religious symbolism and preaching. The majority of these celebrities attained the height of their reputation when the last century was at its meridian. Their researches in the physical universe, their discussions of political and ethical questions, their solutions of historical problems, their literary and artistic contributions, alike exhibit a comprehensive contact with life and a mastery of its phenomena, which at their lowest valuation equal and in scientific scholarship exceed those of any previous time. The bequests they made have been deeply formative of religious beliefs, and no clergyman can appreciate the modern attitude toward his calling, who is not acquainted with the nineteenth century scientists, artists, philosophers and poets.

Preaching, as already noted, enjoyed during that period its share of popularity and entered upon a spacious interval which was not, however, without signs of approaching decline. The dogmatism of Oxford High Anglicans and the liberalism of Broad Churchmen and of not a few Free Churchmen accentuated the difference between two chief types of pulpit advocacy. The one type maintained that the Faith could not

prevail apart from priestly and creedal absolutism. The other repudiated this restriction in behalf of a Christianity which entered every field that bore the footmarks of humanity, and eliminated the artificial definitions of the sacred and the secular, which had no meaning in the theocracy of the Kingdom of God. Ministers who felt the pulse of opposition made a clean breast of many suppressed opinions and thus cleared the air for sincere and positive preaching. Beset by the rapid increase of learning and the nascent beginnings of social and political revolution, churchmen of every shade of belief saw their cherished convictions subjected to severe ordeals. Those who remained upon the dead levels where theory evaporates into opportunism found there but few facilities for an influential ministry; those who dealt candidly with disputed issues broached them in agitating yet useful ways. The champions of orthodoxy and of clericalism scented danger ahead. The protagonists of the new learning pleaded for comprehensive ideals in ethics and religion and for a more dispassionate yet earnest view of spiritual truth. Doctrinal reformers petitioned for a revision of systematic theology, which would harmonize it with the expansion of knowledge. Optimists and poets gilded the pill by asserting that Utopia's Day had dawned. Disappointed factionists reverted to threatenings of the approach of Divine wrath and judgment. Controversies were kindled, some of which still blaze; others are faintly visible by the light of their dying embers.

The close of an era is apt to imitate the succession of the seasons; to be autumnal in its splendor before it deepens down into the gloom of winter. Some such experience as this now befell the pulpit, when numerous factors, difficult to marshal in their sequence, were overshadowed by three dominating questions: the application of the critical and historical method to Holy Writ, the Darwinian hypothesis of biological development, and the social movement initiated by the education of the plain people. The first of these issues has been sufficiently discussed in the foregoing lectures; the second still vexes the peace of the Church; the third is the theater

of her future defeat or triumph. All three were common to the pulpits of English-speaking nations then as they are now, and as yet there has been no final settlement of the difficulties involved. It is plainly evident at this distance that the most important results of the scientific inquiry of the last century were obtained, not in history, nor in science, but in theology. The benefits derived from the upheaval were, however, scarcely more conspicuous than the mistakes that were made and the limitations that were revealed by both theologians and scientists. Theologians promptly pointed out the strange unwelcome answers which scientists gave to imperative questionings about God, man and the moral order. On the other hand, the processes of disillusionment fostered by scientific enquiry which bared but could not undermine the massive foundations of the Christian Faith, were highly objectionable to devout men slow to learn that though forms of religious belief change, its essence persists. Things they then brusquely challenged are now known to be conducive to the praise of God and the moral health of man. Under the clerical control of the colleges and universities, which continued, though diminished, until a few decades ago, studies in the classics and theology were stimulated and the physical sciences neglected. Yet if the education given there did not produce the specialists and experts who have since been overpraised, nor guard its recipients against the perils of the deductive method, it could claim many scholars of the finest culture, theologians of sterling worth, and erudite and eloquent preachers. It was hard to persuade clerical dons, however, that the lordship of learning was not their privilege as the custodians of an infallible revelation. After a preliminary testing of the qualities of induction in historical criticism, the method was further exploited in the evolutionary theory. Ecclesiastics of every school were outraged by this unprecedented invasion of a province which they regarded as peculiarly their own, and the firm opposition of the older scientists, including Agassiz, Buckland and Owen, was aroused. Nurtured in one of the most magnanimous minds of the age,

the idea of natural selection which had been foreshadowed from Lucretius to Wallace was first formally outlined by Darwin. It soon went beyond biology to the capture of practically all the sciences; indeed, with Huxley's pungent advocacy it became militantly aggressive, and flatly contradicted an apologetic which had faithfully served preaching in the past.

You are not foresworn to defend any particular cosmogony, nor to deny that the physical structure of man was derived from animal progenitors. Numerous lines of evidence without actually meeting converge toward the demonstration of this theory. Until they do meet and the irrefutable proof is forthcoming, or even after it has been made, the theory will not interfere with revelatory teaching that man is a spiritual being, divinely created, and dependent upon his Creator for redemption unto life eternal. Nevertheless, the cry of exasperated dismay which arose, when the germinal conception that had flashed upon Darwin with the suddenness of an intuition was elaborated by him, voiced an intellectual intolerance in the orthodox clergy, which no mediæval ecclesiastic could have surpassed. The light was at once extinguished in widely separated religious systems; and while Newton's *Principia* had incurred the keen resentment of thousands, Darwin's *Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man* incurred that of tens of thousands. They were openly anathematized as the antithesis of Christianity according to Christ, destructive of the integrity of the Bible and derogatory to the character of God and of man.

Darwin's assumptions were vast enough to placate the most convinced adherents of the miraculous, who took the pains to examine them. He postulated a universe of organic matter under the reign of law, the uniformity of Nature, the conservation of her energies, and the unbroken continuity of her history. From these premises he drew the conclusions he impressively expounded, which are now a part of the mental equipment of theology as well as of the physical sciences. Given a habitable world in ordered correspondence with the

universe, a few elementary forms of life, a suitable environment, and Darwin proposed to show how that world had been tenanted by natural selection, from bacilli up to man. It should be observed that the processes were not superimposed upon what was passive but were assimilated by what was vitally active. As a theory of causation, therefore, evolution was meaningless; as a theory of methods, it was harmless; as a working hypothesis, it has been excelled, if at all, only by that of gravitation.

He is the sagacious minister of the Gospel who leaves science to the scientists, while he prepares himself as best he can for the propagation of sacred truths which science can never successfully controvert. And the scientific investigator who so far forgets the boundaries of his calling, as to use natural data for dogmatic affirmations about morals and religion, is as perverse and illogical as the pulpiteer who maligns scientific learning because it does not agree with his theological predilections. In fine, thinking men and women everywhere have learned the unforgetable lessons that what is truly religious is finally reasonable and that scientific gains must be subordinated to moral aims, lest we all perish. Yet the saddening reflection persists that, if the ability to view questions from both sides with absolute impartiality and without the glow of personal feeling had not been banished from this infuriated debate, theology and preaching might have been spared years of wasteful and ignoble strife. Of all the theories science has put forth that of evolution was the most capable of being reconciled with Revelation. You believe, I venture to assume, that the Christian Faith is bound to take unto itself the verified wonders of creation, which are resonant with the goodness and wisdom of Deity; that the cosmos must be intelligible to mankind; and that whatever makes life more rational and therefore more truly divine should be a part of the praise which the Church offers to her Lord. Why then was not the idea of progressive development "baptized into Christ"? The assertion that the several endowments of sentient existence, originally breathed into one or more primordial sub-

stances, were ceaselessly urged onward toward higher existence had nothing in it essentially opposed to Christian truth. Renewal, growth, fertility, contingent perfectibility; what are these but spiritual terms imported into the natural world?—terms with which the New Testament abounds at every turn. Here, as it impresses me, was a unique opening for the attachment of the hypothesis of progressive development to the highest interests of the race. Its conscious possession and use in the Church were indefinitely postponed by the explicable but costly reaction of theologians and preachers who refused to harmonize the facts of science with the realities of faith. Those facts and realities were neither consistent nor inconsistent, but different, and such difference is the prerequisite of genuine harmony.

The distinction between the description and formulation which science gives, and the causal and purposive interpretation which theology and philosophy seek, was forgotten by the sincere advocates of a fictitious ecclesiastical or Biblical infallibility, who claimed a supremacy to which they were not entitled over the intellectual life of their age. Yet reconciliation by means of that distinction was possible to the few who had disciplined themselves by observing and thinking upon the ways of God in visible things; who accepted the assured results which science achieved, while they rejected its rash speculations and remembered that the sequence of life is more and fuller life. Among these were the poets, who relieved the tension by the prescience with which they sang in divers tones of the oneness of faith and knowledge, and by their conception of the universe as a compacted whole, obedient to the law of its Maker. They became a source of enlightenment and strength for numberless men and women who shrank alike from sermons in which the foam of denunciation swallowed up the truth at issue, and from a hard and fast materialism which derided the poetic visualization of a presiding Mind. Had the idea of the evolution of endless processions of beauty and utility from primitive beginnings beneath creative guidance been congenial to the dogmatic

preaching of fifty years ago, we should have had less reason to complain of the recession from preaching to-day.

The theory which the orthodox clergy of the English-speaking world spurned afterwards demolished the barriers that restrained scientific and religious enquiries. It gave coherence to otherwise inchoate accumulations of knowledge and aided every kind of research by mapping out the paths on which it could proceed to ascertainable ends. It refined not only the intellectual but the moral features of philosophy and generated the patience which arises from the hope of a constantly brightening future. But there is a reverse and sinister side to evolution, which shows that it was employed to inflict deep wounds not only upon religion but upon the entire life of man. While the interpreters of Christianity remained contemptuous or hostile, what they should have consecrated was eagerly misappropriated by thinkers who were at their wits' end to conceal the bankruptcy of their materialized metaphysic. An expiring and friendless philosophy was resuscitated in the writings of Haeckel, Büchner, and Clodd, who outdid the specious generalizations of Spencer by their morally degrading encomiums of naturalism. Once more theology had played into the hands of its foes, and for a time the attempt of agnostic nescience to reduce revealed religion to a beggarly state seemed to prevail. It was scarcely possible that the evil conclusions, which have since disrupted the social organizations of the world, could permanently affect thought relative to man's place in the hierarchy of nature. Biologists, philosophers and theologians have long been at odds concerning the various interpretations of the evolutionary theory, but for the majority Huxley put the matter truly in his Romanes lecture. He held that evolution was an approximately correct reading of the cosmic chronicles, but declared that ethical progress depends, not on imitating the cosmic process, but on overcoming it. The survival of the fittest was to be set aside by that "horticultural morality" which protects the weak against the strong, and for which the New Testament is mainly responsible. To Huxley then and

not to the purblind professors of *Kultur* must be ascribed the correct exposition of Darwinism. He rebuked in advance the decadent teachers who hid behind an estimable name and violated the strict relativity of evolution as Darwin understood it. Yet they could not have obtained so wide an access to the modern mind had the Church been forearmed against the real antagonists of faith and morals, who stole her property while she was obsessed with such futilities as the Ussherian chronology, or preëmpted by vain attempts to transmute the poetical compositions of Genesis into actual events. You may be certain that when the Church fails other failures are imminent and also that the chief reasons for her failure are within herself. Beyond question the primary cause of the present dearth of pulpit influence in many centers, learned or otherwise, can be traced to its breach with nineteenth-century science. Religion and organized knowledge were at swords' points; lamentable mischief was wrought, and when a truce was called the concessions from either side were too tardy and graceless to be availing. Nor has there been as yet any coördination of the official doctrinal standards of the Church with the assured results of organized knowledge.

II

The theologians of English-speaking Christianity had not recovered from the shock of their first onset with science before a more serious and extensive revolution began to germinate in the social and industrial realms. In the United States the violent disputes concerning human slavery tore asunder Protestant denominationalism, and presaged the Civil War. In Great Britain and her dominions the demands of an unfranchised democracy divided the Church into radical and reactionary camps. There had been no welding of her stubborn separatisms and doctrinal feuds at the crucial moment when the wrongs inflicted upon the toiling masses of the nations were made manifest by revolts in Continental Europe and the Chartist movement in England. Well-to-do citizens

staid Anglicans or Evangelicals in their beliefs, prudent in local affairs, short-sighted beyond them, without initiative and averse to experiment, were untouched by the bickerings of doctors and scholars and seemingly unaware of the social peril incurred by the physical degradation of the proletariat. Dives and Lazarus were in their usual juxtaposition; the affluent were generous when they should have been just, and ignored the underlying causes of the want and misery they occasionally relieved. The poor of the cities and the provinces lived and died wretchedly and insensate. While the great crusade for the social and economic liberation of our fellow men—the immensity of which grows upon us daily—was slowly gathering momentum in Church and State, a belated resistance to progress was made by the Tractarians of Oxford. That "beautiful city, so venerable, so lovely, so unravaged by the fierce intellectual life of our century, so serene," once more became the "home of lost causes and forsaken beliefs."[1] The men of Oriel attempted to pour the new wine into old bottles, and although they failed, their movement rejuvenated Anglicanism and imparted catholic tendencies to its hitherto somewhat provincial communion. The Tractarians were not, as has been asserted, solely negative and obscurantist in their attitude toward modernity. That they looked with an almost fanatical hatred upon the policies of an exceedingly active liberalism by which they were surrounded is unquestionable. But the revival they represented had its chief source in their consciences: they were filled with righteous alarm because of the lukewarmness and laxity of the Establishment. To counteract these they fell back upon the austerer faith of the New Testament, whose original doctrines were registered for them in Anglican formularies and attested by Anglican divines. This ancient religion, delivered for all time by its first teachers, had, as the Tractarians supposed, well nigh faded out of Protestantism. It was therefore to be restored and impressed upon its wayward children in a second and superior Reformation, which should be

[1] Matthew Arnold: *Essays in Criticism*, p. x.

modeled not upon Lutheranism nor Calvinism but upon the Laudian tenets of the Stuart period.

If the Tractarians pictured an ideal world thus to be freed of its wild frenzies and bitter inequalities, so did the contemporary socialism of Karl Marx. The vision of the abnegation of riches, of community in necessities and of the sanctity of poverty, which had been one of the controlling factors of mediæval piety, was dispelled by the commercial development due to an age of machine production. The more potent scheme that Marx penned, under the shadow of the dynastic despotism which followed the Napoleonic interlude, proposed that, instead of sharing their poverty, men should share their wealth. The collectivist state he advocated had little in common with the monastic ideal of the Middle Ages: its essence and its aims were frankly material, the outcome of the contrasts between rich and poor, which the garish light of modern capitalism could not long conceal and eventually illuminated. Socialism has been for reckless spirits a creed of force, akin to anarchism; for other and more amenable adherents a creed of peace to be reduced to practice by persuasion and the recognized rule of the majority. It exceeds in significance for good or ill all previous theories of social economy. It has created an international fellowship extending over Europe and America, and wielded until the recent war an increasing influence upon the domestic and foreign policies of monarchies and republics alike. The term socialism has numerous meanings and the varieties of economic thought which they indicate contain still more numerous errors. The hopeless sons of want protested against all social institutions and were disposed to view sacred ordinations as nothing more than defenses of a plutocratic State. Marx and his associate Engels built up their theses from the volumes of Saint Simon and Ricardo, but their inspiration was due to what they saw about them. Brissot's famous phrase, "property is theft," with which Proudhon has been saddled, and other formulas such as "labor is the measure of value," "the price of labor is that which provides the laborer in general

with the means of subsistence and of perpetuating his species without either increase or diminution as wages increase," were the texts of a new economic, which drew to itself millions who could not detect its inverted dogmatisms and sonorous subterfuges but who viewed with rising anger the evils which really gave them currency. Its evangel sweeps up and down the world like an epidemic, requiring no passports, respecting no frontiers, while truth travels slowly from people to people and often loses much in the passage.

We are chiefly concerned to discover beneath the incessant striving for material benefits those moral elements which the pulpit avoided because they were infected by a tainted propaganda. Mr. Herbert Hoover sees in the present situation at home and abroad the utter breakdown of Socialism, which has shown itself, according to him, an economic and a spiritual fallacy. This is a weighty verdict against it; it does not, however, relieve Christian preachers from the necessity of assuaging the social discontent which separates them from much of the best as well as the worst that is being thought and said elsewhere, and which has also alienated millions of men and women from the Church. Human life has repeatedly been attuned to a different key, but it has always found a working harmony. In this instance its opposing factions would have been more speedily reconciled if the majority of reformers had shown more social wisdom, and the majority of churchmen more social compunction. Reinach's comment that the socialism of the Marxians betrayed a long apprenticeship to servitude can be countered by the statement that the conservatism of ecclesiastical leaders manifested an equally long apprenticeship to indifference. They had little sympathy for the plea, "restitution to the disinherited," because they recalled the various Utopias from Plato to Edward Bellamy, the communistic experiments of Campanella, Robert Owen, Fourier and other theorists, and naturally enough rallied to the existing order for protection against what appeared to them as the unrolling of a scroll of ruinous disaster. That order was by no means desperately wicked in the eyes of

preachers who believed in the old dominance based solely on ownership. Nor was the pain which is symptomatic of our cognizance of reprobate social evils felt by good men and women half a century ago. It has been accentuated during the decrease of the abuses that evoke it because we know their remnant to be removable. They are not the accidental maladjustments of an economic growth which on the whole is beneficial, but the normal product of an abnormal system which should be made to conform to Christian teaching and practice. Such is the logical conclusion reached by responsible thinkers of the Anglicanism of Great Britain, and once it is adopted by the entire Church of Christ, as I believe it must be, she will cease to be fatalistic in her attitude toward social iniquities and proceed to their extermination as one of her primal duties.

Bacon's saying that "the nobler a soul is the more objects of compassion it hath," places clergymen of the immobile kind in a very unfavorable light when contrasted with not a few agitators whom they thoughtlessly crowded to the wall or drove into open rebellion against the Church. The anxiety for doctrinal orthodoxy which then prevailed did not alleviate the situation, because it dealt with abstractions, whereas the sufferings of the people were concrete and required a vivid comprehension, or, better still, an actual experience upon the part of God's ministers if they were to guard the future against the abominations of the past. No visioned care of this kind was forthcoming from clerics who lived in dread of democracy, and would not entertain even its most reasonable requests. The authorship of the Pentateuch, the elaboration of Calvinistic dialectics, the maintenance of the doctrine of eternal punishment, the safeguarding of the principle of authority from "infidel" attacks, the insistence upon official prerogatives, were more absorbing themes for them than those voiced by men in despair, who asked for the recognition of their elementary rights.

Happily this is not the whole truth. There were always steadfast preachers of righteousness who counseled patience

and self-restraint, and remembered the words of Jesus: "Whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant."[2] Industrial reform, the housing of the poor, the abolition of sweat shops, an equitable wage, the diminution of drunkenness and of disease, were the watchwords of courageous divines and philanthropists who often made the pace for their brethren. Like most prophets who did not utter smooth things, their expostulations and warnings were not always welcomed by the Church, and yet from them she learned the beginnings of that social justice which must now be her manifesto if she is to win the formidable groups which are unfriendly or indifferent to her. Teachers and guides who were condemned and persecuted for their heterodox views found an outlet for their zeal in the pastoring of the bodies as well as the souls of their fellow men. Evangelicals, who argued that a sound conversion of the soul would solve the social problem, supplemented their argument with strenuous labors in behalf of the unfortunate and the outcast. True, the humanities which are a Christian apologetic on earth were too often displaced to make room for the penances and raptures preparatory for heaven. Yet their prejudice against the idea of any possible regeneration of society, apart from that of its individual units, did not exclude the complementary truth that regenerated individuals were interdependent members of society with duties to be discharged for the common good. The missionary evangel in non-Christian lands kept alive the holier love which recognized no social distinctions in Christ's Kingdom, and the teaching that no soul was really acceptable to God, which did not enter ethically into its broader human relationships and endeavor to animate them with the spirit of the Master, was sedulously maintained in many notable pulpits.

But the fact that the New Testament knows nothing of solitary religion, and that it carries what may be called spiritual communism to heights which are anticipatory of the

[2] Matthew xx: 26–27.

bliss of Paradise, was not emphasized as it should have been, and some professed believers claimed their right of entrance to a future state of perfection, for which they were more or less incapacitated by their misuse of the probationary state. Nor did the assertion that the rewards of the hereafter would amply compensate for evils submissively endured here silence complainants who knew that it evaded the issue, since they saw extortioners who "combined plunder with prayer" assured of the same celestial privileges. Men of ill-gotten wealth were far too conspicuous in the churches, where they gave greater offense to the genuinely pious and also to the profane than those of a similar depravity who did not mask their greed with hypocrisy. The social and moral implications which demonstrate the reality of the spiritual life were suppressed by an unjust economic; the spirit of Christianity was mutilated in its own machineries. The industrial classes began to look askance upon these glaring inconsistencies, and the temper thus engendered alienated them in large numbers from the Church. Their recession became a *secession,* which formulated a program of its own, substituting for creedal beliefs a confession that often contained the core of Scriptural ethics. This program they propagated with the fervor of zealots for whom its spread was an imperative obligation. It was sometimes the message of Israel's seers and of the New Testament recast, adapted, often uncouthly spoken, and not infrequently weighted down by doctrinaire or lower considerations; yet it was solicitous of the welfare of mankind and alive with convictions about the God of history and of justice, which His prophets have always proclaimed. Their ranks might have been strengthened by the service of some of the choicest spirits of the age, had not the Church been too subservient to heartless social customs and oppressive governments.

These apostles of labor contended that in times of precarious existence, when divided classes were incessantly at variance and the daily grind of poverty and distress told heavily on the masses, life for such could be made tolerable only by the

thought that between them and their oppressors were the strong guarantees of law, of political equality and of humanity. There was then no raving about eradicating the evils of capitalism by confiscation and expropriation, nor regrets that, however ruthlessly such measures might be applied, astute speculators and obstinate survivors of the capitalistic class would always manage to elude them and continue to prey on the life of the community. The earlier reformers were not anarchists, nor has anarchy ever found countenance in the liberty-loving lands of our blood. The chaotic force it contemplates, which will, if it can, finally destroy the intelligent coöperativeness on which social salvation depends, has emerged from benighted regions where vile despotisms gave birth to still viler despotisms. Yet had the Church and nominally Christian states listened to the pioneers of the popular cause, the later slaves of absolutism might not have run amuck. It was a great opportunity lost to make gains out of the growth of society as well as that of knowledge.

Dr. Dale, in his tribute to the Evangelical Revival, analyzed in a statesmanlike fashion its achievements in religious individualism and its failure in social control. Perhaps it is too much to expect that any such awakening shall permeate every sphere of faith and activity; but surely it could have better maintained the lofty traditions of John Wesley, whose lifelong example was a rebuke to wickedness in high places and whose closing words were a warning against godless riches and a plea for the abolition of human slavery, which he denounced as "the sum of all villainies." Among literary masters who supplemented the reformative efforts of later Evangelicals, like Clarkson, Wilberforce and the elder Macaulay, was Carlyle, nothing if not oracular, with a shrewd eye for the snobbery, the sycophancy and the wealth-worship of the now-forgotten forties and fifties of his century. He mercilessly satirized the "respectability in a thousand gigs," which was scrupulously correct in matters of religious deportment and connection, and ever and anon turned aside to paint a terrific picture of the menace to which social extremes

are liable. The permanent part of his volume *Past and Present* delineates Abbot Sampson's rule in Edmondsbury monastery with picturesque vigor, extracting from it the possibility of the return of English-speaking democracy to ancient stability and order. The earlier, caustic, dry, generous, God-fearing Scotchman knew that the mediæval Church, when most blameworthy, was still the strongest ally of the poor, the champion of their welfare and education. The later *St. Thomas contra mundum,* the force-worshiping rhetorician of the "cant" and "quackery" diatribes, author of impossible theories of political economy and of the apotheosis of Frederick of Prussia, is no longer of special moment. Both he and Ruskin, a still more eloquent lay preacher, found it far easier to arraign the narrow outlook of statesmen and ecclesiastics upon social problems than to devise feasible means for their solution. They were alike in their detestation of liberalism, in their fondness for the past, and in their leaning toward a species of benevolent autocracy that would salvage human wreckage by drafting its victims in behalf of efficiency or of artistic loveliness. They did not understand the working man of Great Britain and America, or they would have known that he could not be won by compulsion. Hence these two extraordinarily gifted men were notable for dramatic rallying cries to which the imagination too readily answers, but which reason is compelled to reconsider. Nor did they foresee what they would have lamented, the amateur Socialists, the Fabians, the Intellectuals, the Internationalists who instil a class-consciousness which may yet produce a less attractive aristocracy than the one which is rapidly disappearing. The contributions of Carlyle and Ruskin to the social problem corroborate the truth that neither literary genius nor laudable sympathies of themselves understand the infirmities and needs of the industrial classes. The principles and prejudices of manual laborers, their strength and weakness, their inmost selves and fixed ideas are, as a rule, a sealed book to ministers and laymen who have not shared their lot and learned their opinions at first hand.

There are, however, those who possess by instinct what others have to acquire by painful effort. It was thus with Maurice, Kingsley and their associates who pushed Christian opportunism as far as it would go toward the reduction of open wrongs. They grasped some of the salient elements of the social question and foresaw not a few of its present forms, because they humanized theology and emphasized the ethical ideals of Jesus. The long, ardent, deliberate pursuit of social justice is not found in their writings; yet one can find in them the very real connection between a truly spiritual interpretation of Christ's teaching and its right application to community life and morals. They help us to understand the regrettable fact that cathedral cities are sometimes most laggard in salutary measures, and orthodox centers most deficient in their appreciation of civic welfare. It is impossible, even at this distance, to read the books of Kingsley, which describe the worst side of English landlordism and depict the Church as a fastness for oppressors of the poor and for financial debauchees, without realizing the greatness of the service rendered to the Kingdom of God by this brave advocate of earlier Christian Socialism.

III

The efforts of the American clergy, unimpeded by an alliance between Church and State, were engaged in absorbing domestic questions which involved the preservation of the Union and the freeing of the negro. They did not encounter the feudal castes and privileges which time had sanctioned in the Old World, and for a period they were spared the chronic irritation created by the congestion of city populations and by landless peasantries. Yet from the day of Lyman Beecher's onslaughts upon the wrongs he deplored to that of his son's thunderings against national disintegration and slavery, there was no lack of social difficulties nor of reformers who essayed their settlement. After the Civil War an era of unprecedented expansion gave impetus to the

economic development of the nation. The rapid growth of the United States, the admission of territories into the Union, the enormous inflow of immigration, the taking up of virgin land, the commensurate increase of trade and wealth and the submergence of a lingering colonial simplicity and dignity of life gave rise to the social question as we now have it before the Church and the nation. Poverty reared its ugly head in the larger centers; the traffic in intoxicants and other public evils became unscrupulous and lawless; civic politics grew corrupt; the conflicts between capital and labor were waged with a violence hitherto unknown in the industrial world. It is manifestly impossible to learn everything pertaining to these matters, which still stretch before us like range upon range in the Himalayas. At their present stage, the liquor traffic has been prohibited by a constitutional amendment. The slums and sweat shops, breeding places of disease, vice and crime, are being slowly eliminated. The establishment of a living wage, reduction of the hours of labor, provision for unemployment, further protection of children and young persons, and other measures which are intended to prevent the degradation of industrial groups seem in a fair way to be adopted. The economic framework of society is being scrutinized, and the stimulus of excessive private gain is likely in the near future to be checked by taxation and a more equitable distribution of profits.

The fearless directness and unfailing optimism characteristic of the American people are due to their geographical detachment, to a history eminently fortunate and to unprecedented opportunities for initiative and enterprise. These factors, together with freedom from numerous outworn precedents, have given the Republic a peculiar facility for the alleviation of her social difficulties. Yet it is probable, all things considered, that the social progress of the British Empire has been quite equal to our own. The very proper distrust of paternalism in any form and the firm belief in self-realization are ever present in English-speaking nations. The Anglo-Saxon is capable of quick and effective organiza-

tion under pressure, but he prefers the individualistic and democratic systems by which he has thus far achieved his destiny. He has, nevertheless, become painfully aware that the mass, as distinguished from the self, must be upraised and that to attain this end men and women must consecrate themselves, not in fear nor in surrender to the domination of the untrained, but in the spirit of brotherhood, to co-operation. This is the belief of individuals in every walk of life, who are devoted to the general well-being, and to whom the works of economists and sociologists from Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill to William H. Mallock and Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb are becoming increasingly familiar. The Christian interpretations of society contained in books by clergymen like Dr. John A. Ryan of the Roman Catholic Church, Dr. Washington Gladden, Dr. Lyman Abbott, Professor Harry Ward, the late Professor Rauschenbusch and Professor Peabody of Harvard are found in nearly every clerical library. These men and others who share their views have expressed afresh those social ideals that embody the love of mankind, which is not afraid of experiment and development. General and Mrs. William Booth, Hugh Price Hughes, Cardinal Manning, Samuel Keeble, Canon and Mrs. Barnett, Josephine Butler, Frances E. Willard, Father Dolling, Dr. Edward Judson, Professor Graham Taylor and Jane Addams are other examples of an enlightened leadership that refuses to exhaust its energies in pursuing a routine supposed to quarantine the Church in the world. The successful identification of the Church with all the interests of mankind, to the end that humanity may be redeemed as a whole by her companionship and ministry, will eventually bring back to her sanctuaries many who have forsaken them. Those among us who know the truth of Professor Peabody's remark that there lies at the heart of the present age a burning sense of social maladjustment need not be dismayed, provided we share the humanitarian spirit which he so ably sets forth and which is steadily advancing to assuage that feeling. Without injurious self-assertion, and above all without mere

opportunism, let us highly resolve that the anguish of that heart shall be relieved and its causes removed.

Courage for the achievement of this high purpose may be derived from realizing the gains as well as the losses of the period in review. The British colonial system, now administered in behalf not of the ruling race but of the backward peoples it controls, has been a very great instrument for the advance of civilization. Slavery is practically abolished throughout the world. Christian teachings and institutions are found in every quarter of the globe. The deification of the state has been challenged by force of arms and is now driven to cover by a true nationalism as the basis of federative internationalism. Science, literature and statesmanship contribute in their several ways to the sovereignty of Christ in love, justice and the peace of the whole fraternity. Yet in preparing for your mission as His ambassadors, you have but to compare what has been attained in knowledge with the paucity of accomplishment in subduing the evils that destroy society, in order to define your specific obligation to uproot them.

Permit me, at this juncture, to offer a few suggestions. Sermons upon contentious social matters may vibrate with feeling but if they are deficient in facts and in logic they are not to be excused, however laudable their motives. The carp-like avidity with which some pulpiteers gulp down the latest revolutionary theory is an evidence of their intellectual inferiority or of their desire after a spurious reputation for originality. The semi-educated preacher is separated from the sober sense of his hearers when he prematurely declares for any social method as the universal panacea. On the other hand, the preacher who is passive before wrong, content to offer etherealized meditations in seclusive circles withdrawn from the burdens of human existence, will have to learn that the Redeemer he professedly worships is still in the press of the multitude. The spirituality which is not virile enough to develop character by contact with the grimmest phases of life as we know it will not survive the tribunal of the Son of

Man. In your recoil from this exotic religiousness, however, do not rush to the other extreme and inject the virus of unrest into your utterances on social questions, careless of what delirium and madness may follow. Some speculations upon social progress, disdainful of all limitations, cater to the credulous, who indulge the hope that the false gods which are to be set up will be more lenient with their incompetency than those which they now serve. Incentives to dehumanizing envy assume at times a specious appearance of altruism; purveyors of nostrums pose as the friends of the populace. Nothing is more facile than for a glib tongue to deceive the unwary, and nothing is more costly than the eventualities of the deception.

Have a warm regard for the countless Christians, rich and poor, and neither rich nor poor, who are the stamina of English-speaking lands. They may be evolutionary rather than revolutionary in their views, but they are aware that natural inequalities cannot be eliminated and are resolved that artificial ones shall be. The solidarity of saints, which is frequently roughly censured by the impetuous Ruperts of social regeneration, is an essential part of your working capital as a preacher of righteousness. The rejuvenated sentiment which precedes that regeneration is made possible by Christian conviction and by its resolute action. It is not by chance that the most hopeful features of an ethical renaissance, as free from the plagues of anarchy as from those of autocracy, are to be found in those Christian commonwealths to which world-leadership is now assigned.

Be explicit in your differentiation between humanizing and Christianizing the people. Reform of any sort is not New Testament regeneration, nor is the worship of the humanities the worship of holiness, or Athens might have been the permanent shrine of devotion. Greek culture was the best the earth has had, and yet its ablest modern interpreter, Matthew Arnold, reminded us that men could not live by it. The impressive lessons of the past contradict the empiricism that learned persons are necessarily the friends of social wel-

fare and educated communities the forerunners of God's Kingdom. Nations steeped in artistic sentimentalism and scientific lore have bewildered us by their relapses into barbarism. These moral aberrations show that social redemption has to be coördinated with individual regeneration in order that the wickedness you lament may be assailed from within and from without. The New Testament has placed its imprimatur on these tactics and your Master is their supreme Exemplar.

Unify your thinking on the social question that it may become the parent of a constructive message. Some sermons fall short in this respect and exalt poverty as the fountain of virtue; others, equally deficient, denounce it as the associate of vice. The poor man is blessed and again he is banned. The eulogy of poverty has often ended in the superstition that hallows beggary and reserves the blessings of heaven for the parasites of earth. The defamation of poverty is a scandalous reflection upon multitudes of deserving folk whose temporal circumstances are in every way honorable to them. Evil doing is confined to no class; the precepts of justice and mercy are obeyed by members of all classes. Lust, idleness, anger, revenge, are shared alike by educated and uneducated, rich and poor. These passions inhere in human nature and their germs are as perniciously active in the notable sinners of history as in its vilest criminals. At neither end of the social scale is there a marked predominance of good or of evil; yet much preaching, social discussion and reformative legislation lean toward the idea that entire groups of men and women can be arranged according to their material possessions.

Again, the pulpit's function is not to advocate theories of social economy but to provide inspirational direction. Preachers are hardly ever wise counselors upon industrial affairs, upon questions involving work and wages, production and distribution. Neither their training nor their proclivities equip them to be judges and dividers of other men's holdings. "Let the dead bury their dead" may sound harshly, until you

recollect that it prevents a preacher from diverting his powers into minor channels and consecrates him to the heralding of the Evangel of life. Make war on recognized evils, whether they stalk abroad or skulk in secret; upon the sickening mixture of protestations of high piety with low contra-social conduct; upon tubercular areas, fevered dens, windowless tenements, child labor, open profligacy, and the wickedness of the hidden man of the heart which is the author of them all. Do so in the spirit which overcomes, not by denunciation alone,—a habit that may give you far more relief than it affords the causes you espouse,—but by instruction and by the affirmations of righteousness which alone can prevail against positive evils. Let your appeal be to reason as well as to sentiment, intended not merely to persuade but to convince and to crown conviction with that conversion of character and deeds which it is meant to produce.

I venture to break a lance with those who contend that the advocacy of social righteousness should be the absorbing theme of your ministry. When everything has been said for it that can be said, the fact remains that the restitution of the entire man after the pattern of his Creator is the whole of which social righteousness is but a part. The strategies of preaching also have to be remembered here. I have found frontal attacks in the pulpit apt to arouse needless antagonism unless deftly made. By means of inference, implication, indirection, you not only avoid the monotony of presentation which besets some speakers but often awaken the moral susceptibilities of an audience. Do not play on one string till it breaks, nor repeat accusations until they become stale. At all times insist upon the New Testament doctrines as the absolute principles of a Christian sociology. When you have adequately stated and applied them to modern conditions your social work is well done, and he is a resolute person who ventures to repudiate them. They are the succor of the individual and the community conscience, of the national ethic, of international lawfulness. Many to whom you appeal exceed you in the knowledge of classes and their callings, of groups and their necessi-

ties; but you have the effective Word that covers them all as the sky over-arches the landscape. That Word should become by your dispensation the source of those lasting benefits for society which, as history demonstrates, proceed from the moral and religious changes effected by the Gospel in the heart of man.

We could hardly imagine a more engaging inquiry than to ask, What is to be the ultimate outcome of the recent victory of the Allies which is yet far from being a complete moral triumph? But it is more requisite for you to educate modern democracy for its new status and responsibilities. It is sure to expand, to intensify, perhaps to harden, and to use its new-found strength for new-found purposes. It has ameliorated conservative churchmanship, dictated political platforms, ended the subjection of women, modified the ideals of the family, of property, of trade, of profits. What will it not do when it fully comes to its own? Talleyrand called the progenitors of the French Revolution an aristocracy of blackguards, thus showing that nothing makes clever people reason so badly as prejudice. Yet, as a name with many meanings, democracy is liable to confusion, from which preachers are not exempt, who identify it with numerical majorities or with the poor or the laboring classes. In its deepest and broadest sense it signifies "a certain general condition of society, having historic origins; not only involving the political doctrine of popular sovereignty, but representing a cognate group of corresponding tendencies over the whole field of moral, social, and even of spiritual life within the democratic community." [3] Already the tides of popular freedom are nearing the full, and if they should presently find an undue release we are not to suppose that they will surely bring us to a safe anchorage. Men are still prone to be eager for what flatters their pride rather than for what serves the good of their souls. Although the inspiration of modern democracy is found in its conviction of an upward and onward destiny for mankind, its most fascinating ideals may prove faulty when submitted to experimental tests.

[3] Viscount Morley: *Miscellanies*, Fourth Series, p. 171.

The future peace and progress of the world will depend upon whether democracy is a more perfect organ for the demagogue, the partisan, the spoilsman, the corruptionist; or a sublime baptism of the spirit of nations into the stern and high conceptions of De Tocqueville, Marshall, Mazzini, Lincoln, Gladstone, Bright and Roosevelt. Certainly the Church must not be lulled again into a false security, a drowsy feeling of things accomplished, or listen to those who add another predicted millennium to the museum of such millenniums in the past. Her place is at the head of the column, not, as too often heretofore, querulous and questioning in the rear. She has to watch against the dangers and work for the advantages of the momentous experiment on which society is entering and which aims at making government an expression of the mind of the state. But who or what shall purify and illuminate that mind or shepherd the shepherds themselves? The average man is doubtless an admirable person, but one does not have to be cynical to understand that his preferences are usually cautious and stationary. He hates to be thought mediocre, and yet he is not always given to those larger views of civilization which lessen mediocrity; and if those views do not tend ostensibly to his own profit, he is apt to favor others which seem to promise immediate benefits. When his social disabilities are removed, must everything be brought down to his level, to that excessive uniformity which is adverse to spiritual values? Or should we encourage another aristocracy, such as our best men and women constitute, which lives not for its own sake but for the sake of all? Preachers will have to consider these issues on which John Stuart Mill, distant as he seems now to some of us, sheds light. He pleaded for a social science, evolved by capable authorities, as exact in its rules and applications, as correct in its diagnoses and remedies, as physical science. This he failed to secure, but the failure was more influential than some recent so-called triumphs of popular rule. Leadership, in brief, is essential to democracy, which is foredoomed unless supplied with the type of character that does not permit its aims and methods to be

actuated by private interests. Moral and political education cannot be imparted by civic catechisms, however virtuous their sentiments. It can only be communicated by personalities filled with the sense of responsibility to God and to their fellowmen. Ethical energy of the highest kind and a spiritual culture which is at present too rare, are requisites for the uplifting of democracy to those heights which men imagine far more often than they gain. The wise, judicial ordering of the new freedom will tax every genuine quality of Christian statesmanship in the pulpit and out of it. It should be your ambition to assist in bearing its impending burdens by promoting Christianized progress as against selfish nationalism, or denationalized Levantism, or oligarchical rule, or the tyranny of mob law.

Such, then, are the modern social tendencies which call for preachers who are fortified by the belief that action cannot go ahead of ideas, nor ideas be produced without character, nor character be generated without Christ. Then reason will not have to be jettisoned at the biddance of the crowd, nor wayward impulses be substituted for orderly inquiry, nor democracy be confined to policies that are emotional rather than rational, popular rather than righteous. The process is an open one, the understanding of which is simplified because Christianity and the modern social problem are at last in vital contact. The Church knows that the world, no longer dumb, listless, exanimate, is demanding great things of the disciples of Jesus, who are far more inclined than formerly to contribute their share of saving social effort for mankind. The religious and moral consequences of this changed attitude embrace the righteous dealings of internationalism, the perpetuity of an equitable industrial and universal peace, the reconciliation of class with class by justice and not by doles. An inestimable value is placed to-day upon the right of the individual to the fullest development of personality. Yet society is not, as some social philosophers would have us believe, the sole interpreter of human nature and its needs. The claims of our Faith in behalf of the human unit and its revelation of the

divine dignity and wonderful destiny of every single soul have introduced a new ethic into all affairs. We derive our ideals not from below but from above and must keep them in working relation with the earth. Service, not material profit, should be the chief motive of human activity and human achievement. And although the inescapable responsibility of Christian men and women for complete devotion to the evolutional reconstruction of the entire social system commits them to no present or future measures as finalities for this end, it does exact from them an essential and practical application of the principles of the New Testament to all such matters as property, industrial and capitalistic organization, democratic rule and public education. In a word, they are pledged to the maintenance and extension of the monarchy of Christ in the world that now is, as well as in that which is to come.

CHAPTER IV

CROSS CURRENTS WHICH AFFECT PREACHING

Therefore seeing we have this ministry, even as we obtained mercy, we faint not: but we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

II Corinthians iv: 1–2.

CHAPTER IV

CROSS CURRENTS WHICH AFFECT PREACHING

Contrary groups—The misanthrope and others—The secular Press—Popular fiction—Sensationalism—Negativism—Pronounced individualism—Sectarianism—Church unity—Need of a catholic theology—The ultimate phase of the Church.

You are frequently advised in a time like the present, so intellectually acute yet so profoundly disturbed, when every reason for faith is probed to its depth, every human institution called in question, that the preacher should view with sympathetic understanding those popular tendencies, the deeper causes of which have been discussed in the preceding chapter. No one disputes the wisdom of the advice, nevertheless the significance of your interpretation of the common mind depends upon your previous possession of the mind of the Master. Fellowship with Him is the secret of a strength that "always moves and cannot die," of a freedom that saves His servants from undue subjectivism or imitative impressionism. The divine energy He transmits through the consecrated personality of the preacher clothes sacred edicts with authority, wrecks the dominion of sin, upbuilds moral manhood and purifies conduct. Infinite need craving satisfaction, limitless distress calling for succor, rapidly running tides of public agitation, social stagnancy and indifference bespeaking convulsion, are trials of your confidence in the divine Gospel. If nothing is certain in its content, there is no certainty in ethics, no moral obligation incumbent upon all alike; the will of man, not the will of God, is then the rule of life, and every one has the right to do what he has the means of doing. An unswerving belief in the teachings of the New Testament and their transforming forces is the only criterion of judg-

ment among the ever fluctuating welter of human opinions. After you have brought to bear upon modern problems the array of sifted fact, the light of tried experience and of sound reasoning, their ultimate solvent is found in the Evangel of Jesus. Avoid, then, the error of confusing its eternal realities with things that are merely lengthy or for the moment protuberant. Concentrate your attention upon the unquenchable light of the Incarnation, which still shines in the darkness and shows that the fate of humanity is bound up in the reign of Christ and that the response to His appeal is to be obtained from the aroused conscience of mankind. With these observations in mind, let us continue our survey of the prospects of the pulpit and the difficulties it encounters, without abating one jot of heart or hope.

Among the trying folk with whom you may have dealings, none will tax your patience and hope more than the misanthrope, whom Aristotle described as a being either below or above the rest of mankind. He dwells apart, not only from preachers but from all men, and will not be conciliated. For one reason or another, always insufficient to justify an attitude so unnatural, he has come to distrust and to dislike, if not indeed to despise, his fellow creatures. You may be sure that the misanthrope knows nothing about the "peace which passeth understanding," since no one can be right with God who is so woefully wrong with man. Whatever his malady may be, whether it is an inverted egoism which supposes that it has monopolized for itself what little virtue there is on earth, or some other disease, undiagnosed, which festers unchecked in his soul, his case is serious and urgent, and the only cure for it is the renewal of his being through spiritual regeneration. Then there is the unemotional individual, whose mind works with mechanical precision uninfluenced by sentiment, who finds constant pleasure in the dissection of religious beliefs, laws and customs, in exposing what he deems their numerous imperfections, and devising fanciful substitutes for them. He takes into account every fact except human nature itself, and seeks to refashion the

world according to his own pattern. He often finds it an easy and always a congenial matter to persuade ardent idealists who have experienced a crushing and bitter sense of failure and disappointment, that current Christianity is a thing of delays, compromises, intrigues and deceptions. Closely akin to this species of critic is the out-and-out unbeliever who has succumbed so completely to despair about the final issue of things that he is thankful that no life lives forever. And at no far remove is the believer who has revived a Manicheism which divides the universe between good and evil, and attributes to the latter a regnancy that deprives God of His sovereignty. Standing apart, saddened spectators of the perplexing incongruities of the times, are hosts of despondent spirits, within and without the churches, who are almost ready, however reluctantly, to abandon as hopeless the world in which they live. The disappearance of familiar landmarks which were supposedly permanent and the widespread conviction that human nature is a great deal better than most theologies in the past have admitted, have also added to the religious unrest and to the decrease of church attendance, conditions distinctly injurious to the moral and spiritual health of the people, and which are not met by mere denunciation.

Sometimes the spirit of men and women is more accessible for our ultimate purpose than are their formal beliefs. Those who show an outward deference to the Church, while they repudiate her spiritual control, constitute a more stubborn faction than others who are nearer to faith and love in life and deed than in profession. This pronounced individualism, which is one of the difficulties with which the modern ministry has to contend, received its earlier impetus during the Reformation, when its curt, contemptuous challenge of sacerdotal abuse and ecclesiastical tyranny was followed by an overeager intellectualism that divided Protestantism and bred the temper which rebels against a common religious practice and discipline. Living as you do in the ebb and flow of that historic upheaval, you cannot enjoy its immense gains without also enduring its losses. Yet the Christian ministry has

known few more prophetical seasons than those of the last four hundred years, and the inference is permissible that it will know them again. Just now, however, the pulpit is patronized, not obeyed, and the clergy are indorsed by certain social groups only when they manifest the love for conservatism which is associated with the dread of new ideas. Complacent and non-committal prudence of character is considered judicious because it refrains from judging, and impartial because it is invertebrate. If a minister confines himself strictly to parochial matters, he is eulogized as a model of discretion; if he upbraids grave public evils, he is accused of recklessness. The sanctuaried message which avoids burning questions of right and justice and is always consolatory when, at intervals, it should be purgative, is highly commended by some laymen who lament the rarity of that particular kind of discourse they term "the unadulterated Gospel": something too sacred for contact with the earthly affairs in which they are immersed six days of the week and about which they are exceedingly sensitive on the Lord's Day. In reality this preaching is a makeshift which sacrifices the scope and meaning of the Gospel to the social and ethical prepossessions of some of its hearers.

Then, too, the secular press assumes the right to prescribe the boundaries within which prophetic genius must operate; occasionally putting on the magisterial manner of a Sir Oracle and speaking of a righteously outraged and intrepid minister as though he had left the temple to feed strange fires, or sacrilegiously exposed his calling to obloquy and contempt. The warmest tribute some would-be censors have to offer a deceased minister is that he earned everybody's good will—a very doubtful compliment at the best and one which Jesus never received. Even in the relief of the poor and unfortunate, more than ninety per cent of the funds for which are obtained in or through the Church, the clergy are usually ignored. The names that garnish the literature of eleemosynary societies are largely drawn from political, legal and commercial circles. What has become of the honorable place which the American

pastor filled when his fellow citizens rejoiced to second his efforts in education, in ethics, in the cleansing of the Augean stables of municipal corruption and the preservation of national unity? Of course opportunities of this sort do not present themselves at every stage, but when they have done so the ministry has often forfeited them by its blunders, its timidity, its acquiescence in the secularization of society. Clergymen who would not submit to the predominance of secular interests, who resented, as you should resent, the stupid boycott by those interests of an intelligent and unselfish public service upon the part of the pulpit, have been chided by their straiter brethren. In contradistinction to this narrowness recall the stimulating example of the late Bishop Potter, who once summoned a derelict Mayor of New York City to the bar of public opinion, and on another occasion declared before the President of the Republic that the national rectitude had deteriorated. These instances of fearless remonstrance were as sagacious as they were salutary, and evinced a righteous use of great talents and of a commanding clerical position to elevate public morals and also to increase the dignity and worth of the ministerial office.

There are many to-day who assume that by its expansion in multifarious directions life has been carried beyond the control of faith. We are told that the circumstances which once sustained Christianity have ceased to do so; that it has lost its vital character and is now an optional matter. Of course, if it has no divine inspiration left in it, no more conquests can be made by it, and its defenders are thrown back exclusively upon its heroic past. It may be that the comparative loss of confidence I am describing comes in part from the increase of public education. There is now less of blind belief and a more acute spirit of inquiry, by which creeds and institutions of every kind are judged. Former distinctions between the preacher and the people have faded in the light of a wider common knowledge. The peaks are lower, the general level is perhaps higher; yet this change does not compensate for the decline in that meditative reverence which is man's true atti-

tude when he would inquire of his Maker. Buckle insists that doubt is the progressive force; be that as it may, the crude thinking and hysterical speech which attend much modern doubt are a serious hindrance to progress. The suggestions that would rob preaching of every vital function and aggressive feature are perhaps best answered by philosophers guiltless of the suspicion of orthodoxy. They are fully persuaded that the growth of ideas, the increase of wealth, the surgings of the social systems, the orgy of incorrect thinking and false use of language, the doctrinaire tendencies which it is the fashion to hold up as idealisms, the rivalries of nations and races, make Christianity not less but more indispensable, and its faithful proclamation an imperative duty. The appetite for the temporal, the ruthless exploitation of moralities, the clamor for individual rights at the expense of communal good, the indifference to what is given, the greed for what is received, the open or tacit contempt for first principles, the desertion of sacred places and precepts—are from our standpoint self-condemnatory and will, if unchecked by a reasonable righteousness, overthrow the marvelous civilization which it has taken three thousand years to build. The preacher who sees the dire possibilities of a day of inflated arrogance followed by a night of woe and disillusionment has learned the deadly fallacy of placing moral effects ahead of their causes or of soliciting from the natural man a justice and stability for which he is utterly incapable, apart from the saving health of the Gospel. The pathetic exclamation of the prophet: "Oh that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea," is entirely appropriate to the present situation, and the chief solvent of its painful problems. The world is still blinded by the fatuous conceit of disordered brains that these coveted blessings of which the prophet speaks can be had without previous submission to its Maker's mandates. And one of your first duties is to insist that those mandates must be obeyed if a true prosperity is to be attained; that the religious destitution which is created by

flouting them is the prolific source of personal sin, of social paralysis and of the terrors that afflict mankind.

Take advantage of this condition to enter the larger territories of human activity. Utilize by every remunerative method the potencies of a penitential hour before it lapses. Avoid the separatism that has been the fetish of the pulpit. Comply with the proper demands your fellow men make upon your ministry, which may again become the guardian power likely to be taken at its word, when it will have to verify itself by its religious achievements. Let nothing induce you to relinquish the breadth, the sympathy, the open mindedness which give out force and vitality without losing their own activity. Consolidate the gains of your greater and nobler interests as a preacher by relating them to affirmative rather than prohibitory goodness, to a goodness rescued from the enervation of segregated pietism and eventuating in ethical habits. Chosen, as you are, to uphold the things that are of God, without which men would not be men, but evil and miserable beings, vigorously contend for robust virtues as against neutral shades of character. The religion which is embodied in conduct does not exhaust the content of New Testament doctrine, but it does give it the setting that obtains an audience with those who are beyond the pale by emphasizing the antecedents of redemptive faith and by anticipating its deeper results in holiness of motive and deed.

Those who rely upon the semblance and not the reality of being abound everywhere, enamored of their idols, averse to reflection, as ignorant theoretically of the philosophy of the materialism they practice as of the spiritualities they evade. Among them are the supercilious, who crave better bread than can be made with wheat and who illustrate the saying that "the truth shall be in their right hand, yet they shall not know it." Others of an excellent sort try to penetrate to a solid basis of ideals, or implore you with moving sincerity to read for them the riddle of life's contradictions. The larger number of those outside the Churches is too loosely aligned for hard and fast classification, or too prosaic to rivet the attention

of the casual observer. But no expert skill is required to demonstrate the sure reaction from excessive dogma to incapacitating doubt. The statements of zealots whose whirling words about matters of religion arouse resentful questioning in their intelligent hearers have become wearisome by repetition. Intellectual outrages which thoughtful Christians deplore are frequently perpetrated in the name of their Lord, Whose cause has received more hurt from its foolish friends than its most astute foes could inflict upon it. "The wicked are wicked, no doubt, and they fall, and they come by their deserts, but who can tell the mischief which the very righteous do?" The varied genius of these groups for escaping the Gospel cannot equal its genius for their arrest. Despite pride, pharisaism, hardness, doubt, remoteness or fear, ultimately they will have to submit to the truths you represent. Gather them, therefore, into your heart's purpose and desire; spread before them the bountiful provisions of God's eternal love in Christ. The brotherhood they have recently glimpsed at the crisis of a universal fate can be made real and near. Their differences and the difficulties these create are the very stuff of your success as preachers.

Again, the modern pulpit is confronted by the rivalry of the popular novel. It is not with you as it was with the preachers of preceding centuries, whose teachings were dispensed to congenial constituencies. A considerable section of the public now gets what theology it has outside the Church. Hazlitt once observed that a philosopher who was a writer of romance was a rare phenomenon in the history of letters; what would he have said of romancers who have become self-constituted doctors of divinity, ratifying or rejecting articles of faith as they please, or settling in any conceivable way supreme questions of God, character and human fate? Yet one could name a hundred story-writers, ranging from George Eliot to H. G. Wells, who have influenced popular opinion on these subjects to an extent that may well be the envy of an equal number of trained and powerful preachers. This didactic leaven is often found in fiction which is in no sense ecclesias-

tical in its bias, and where the author's art is subservient to the message he wishes to convey. He may chance to be without definite religious beliefs, in which case the theology pervading his chapters will take its characteristics from his own consciousness. This solution of religious teaching in fiction has evidential value, since it shows that men can repudiate doctrinal statements and yet retain a minimum of faith, which, distilled through the medium of the imagination, testifies to the rudimentary theology that cleaves to conscience and life.

We may be sure of the scorn and calumny of a decadent group of novelists and dramatists who idealize licentiousness and blasphemy, or invest the puppets of a rollicking Bohemia with fictitious merits. Conversely, they hold up preachers to ridicule in that poor image of their fond creation, the conventional Protestant parson of the stage, a character which either violates every ordinary rule of clerical life or is in point of manliness and brains the shadow of a shade, glimmering on the verge of downright idiocy. An increasing number of novels is now written in behalf of sociological reforms, or against what the authors deem a fantastic religious devotion which busies itself with tithing mint, anise and cummin and forsakes the weightier matters of the law. They accuse the Church of false claims and practices, or contrast her present humiliation with her past glory. In all these things the writers have but to summon from the recesses of their imagination whatever they need for their most fanciful descriptions. So long as these do not clash with popular tendencies, they are widely read by many who are unaware that their glib dogmatizing on social and religious subjects, in terms that are often a mere name for ignorance, is a trap to ensnare the unwary. Nevertheless, in nearly all fiction—good, bad and indifferent—there is either a voluntary or an enforced tribute to the broad distinction between righteous and unrighteous being. The great novelists recognize this distinction with an impartiality similar to that of the sculptors of the Middle Ages, who carved on the fronts of churches the processions alike of the saved and the damned. Certain characters are

intended to engage our emulation, others to provoke our anger and contempt. The ever-active instincts of society which they embody distribute blessings and cursings with equal fidelity, and the ruling forces of Nature which they portray are more merciless than the most orthodox eschatology. In these higher forms of fiction one finds that spirituality which pays homage to the Power that reigns in justice, and the elements which belong to the universal moral sense of the race are asserted here as everywhere.[1]

While we are debtors to their commendable qualities, which not infrequently are a precipitate of moral sanity, there are other and malevolent traits of this type of literature which weaken allegiance to religion and to righteousness. Further, the materialism that vulgarizes, and the meretricious cleverness that cheapens the popular mind and fosters its latent or open dislike of spiritual authority; the irreverence that incapacitates the soul for the use of its own divinities, have been fed to repletion by a species of literature for which the United States is unhappily notorious. Multitudes are forearmed against our mission by what they read as well as by their general manner of living. The preacher must either try to appease their insatiable craving for novelty and excitement, or spend his best energies in arousing audiences shrewdly eager about temporal things but apathetic toward those which are eternal. They are drawn to him, if at all, by his peculiarities rather than by his thought and forget his wisest words while emphasizing his look, his tone, or his gestures. If he is deficient in histrionics, his theme, though carefully wrought out, is caviare to the general. On the other hand, the poverty of some preachers' utterances is likely to be concealed from the mass by the tricks of their bearing. The efforts of a class of ministers to entertain instead of to instruct are a doleful confession of the avidity for novelty which has consumed in them the faculty for meditation and worship. Those trains of reflection so essential to good preaching are incessantly broken by sensational practices which ham-

[1] T. G. Selby: *The Theology of Modern Fiction*, pp. 1–7.

per pregnant views of religion. Like the wind-ruffled pool which cannot mirror the beauty of the sky, such practices prevent the sobriety and confidence which are the preacher's strength. The world is too much with him night and day, and far more with him now than when Wordsworth protested against its weakening contact. It leaves few openings for the refinement of his intellect or the education of his heart. He does not assimilate what he knows, nor does he develop that control over his gifts which would impart to them spiritual quality and adequate expression. In short, he also is a victim of the emphemerality he presumably opposes.

The sequence between sensuality and physical and moral ruin is the alphabet of ethical teaching. Rakes and libertines are speedily known for what they are and have no reputable defenders. Lovers of pleasure more than of God come to their own place in due time. And though it is customary to denounce the flagrantly sinful as the worst of characters, and the skeptical as composing the most formidable factor against religion, I question if these determinations are correct. The havoc such people bring upon themselves and others is incessant and irreparable and should be prevented in every possible way. But notwithstanding their desperate state, open transgressors are seldom without convictions about religion, which agitate their souls and warn them that the offense and the penalty of evil living grow on the same stem. Nor are they insensible to the loss and the pain which their daily experience attests. What shall be said, however, of the conventionally respectable multitudes who are spiritually torpid? Solomon himself might be baffled in trying to separate their truth from its associated falsehood, their principle of action from its encompassing prejudice. Lukewarm allies are the most dangerous enemies of the Gospel; they blur every line it draws and confuse in the general mind the paramountcy of its nature and claims. The number, social standing and influence of nominal Christians who are actual worldlings make these your severest difficulty. Not a few preachers yield to their gravitation, turn earthward with them and substitute for the veri-

ties of the Divine Evangel their ideas of temporal wisdom and its benefits. These reciprocal effects of the pew upon the pulpit have thus proved disastrous to much incipient prophecy, which has been stifled by the vitiated atmosphere it breathes. Could this congealed, static mass of humanity be re-fused by the fires of a consuming religious passion, melting it into a new penitence and intensity of devotion, the indifference which saps pulpit authority would largely disappear. As it is, the truths of the Christian life are faint and unreal in the eyes of these indifferent multitudes, and what adherence they give them is elusive and precarious. Some take refuge in philanthropic appendages of religion, exalting work beyond bounds because its requirements are far easier than those of faith. Others preserve a minimum of decorous respect for the teachings of the Church and the Bible, and a commendable desire that their children shall be instructed in them. Individuals, decidedly inclined to the influences of rhetoric and averse to the restraints of reason, fall under the momentary spell of rhapsodists who ask no sacrificial efforts of them, but who do occasionally set at naught the Christian civilization which centuries of slow travail have accomplished. Such people are apt to drift down the stream of tendency that has the swiftest flow. They are easily swept into spasmodic action by a gale of windy talk from agitators who idealize revolt and have neither the fixity of purpose nor the independency of circumstances which a settled faith imparts. The grace that has appeared unto all men does not attract spirits which are strained or relaxed by every change in the fitful temperature of the day's moods. The pity is that large numbers of those who have forsaken the House of God are content to remain in a state of moral mediocrity which recognizes nothing better than its own self-righteousness and is satisfied so long as it escapes social ostracism. To such the herculean self-denying labors of the missionary and the saint are inexplicable and unalluring; to be ascribed, as they suppose, to a peculiar genius for the religious life which they themselves neither have nor wish to have.

As a rule, however, the amorphous body of modern indifferentism to religion remains true to form. It is passive, not active, ranging from a shadowy consciousness of Christian teaching, which is negligible, to the support of cults that seldom rise above the level of vague sentimentalism. Needless to say, the views of these typical groups are not standardized by Scriptural nor experimental religion, of which little remains in their minds except a muddy mixture of irrelevancies, but take the license of form and utterance dictated by temperamental instincts and proclivities. The aloofness they feel toward the pulpit and every other agency of the Church is shared by large numbers of Hebrews toward the synagogue and by a proportionately lesser number of Roman Catholics toward the altar of their faith. It is a universal condition, not deemed detrimental by those whom it affects but, on the contrary, indicative of their candor and mental superiority. I am not pronouncing indiscriminate judgment upon these backsliders, but simply indicating some of their main tendencies which oppose genuine religious progress. They have lost nearly all traces of the central and coöperative Christian mind which from the beginning has proclaimed Jesus as the Christ of God and the Saviour of men. What, it may here be asked, is the fate of Laodiceans who neither exert themselves to deny the Evangel nor to place themselves at its disposal; by whom fidelity to ordinary interest is stressed; for whom the world to come is as though it were not, and its ministries excluded from their souls? The main result of their recreancy is the secularization of life, with religious loss followed by deterioration of moral fiber. At each remove such people are swept beyond the spiritualities which enable the Christian to rise to a higher state of being. The preachers they sometimes patronize are not likely to receive a second hearing from them, should their themes be pitched above those maxims of worldly prudence which excite no uneasy thoughts.

The heedlessness of throngs bent on reprehensible pursuits, the incontinence of flesh-worshipers, the inordinance of the derelict who spurn duty, and other evil groups and habits, all

which preachers and moralists combine to castigate, are not always due to debased parentage or corrupted environment. Not seldom their origin can be discovered in wills rebellious against the divine law, in hearts which deliberately resist the admonitions of Holy Writ and the searchings of the Spirit. The light which men and women have who thus act eventually expires, leaving them in the shadowy thoroughfares where darkness deepens and night draws on apace. There they dwell ensconced in custom, settled in their "blind life within the brain," undisturbed by the conflict that the good fight of faith necessitates, and no examination, however minute, can detect all the numberless threads which make the tangled web of their captivity. You may crave for your message what is sympathetic and inclusive as against what is severe and separative, but it must be subject to the distinctions which Christ Himself decreed. These are definitely and in some instances finally condemnatory. Those who build upon the truth which He taught build upon the rock, but those who refuse to do so are ground to powder.

This solemn sequence cannot be set aside as a theological anachronism, since the weightiest facts in human history have always sustained it; and though some preachers have omitted it from the list of their ideas, the omission has no effect upon its actual progress. It finds terrific instruments for its execution in those demoralizations of peace which are the preludes of war. Nor does the moral organ in man fail to warn him of the penalties which are the outcome of wrong-doing. A notable place is given in classic literature by Æschylus to the Eumenides, who pursued the transgressor with hands of iron and feet of lead; to Nemesis, daughter of Night, who tracked him down with relentless vengeance. Such were that ancient world's dramatic visualizations of retribution for sin. And the modern world has also its furies, undeterred by the fancied superiorities of the age, no less fearful and resolute in punishment than those depicted thousands of years ago. Forgetfulness by men of their obligations to God, succeeded as it is by forgetfulness of what they owe to themselves and to society,

has invariably involved them in disasters which so-called humane theologies have not been able to alleviate. The future punishment of sin can be left to the wisdom of the Eternal Father. But it is significant that, when Jesus was unable to make headway against the religious indifference, hypocrisy and rebellion of those who crucified Him, He not only denounced them in scarifying terms, but summoned them to answer for their wilful betrayals of truth and righteousness before the tribunal of God.

II

Among the rivalries which compete with the Christian pulpit to-day must be numbered those excursions of unlicensed imagination into the Unseen known as Theosophy, Christian Science, Mental Healing, New Thought and Spiritualism. They are largely the fruits of that revulsion against an overweening materialism which began to assert itself during the later half of the nineteenth century. Each of these cults has its peculiar tenets, but all unite to repudiate the once powerful axioms of the Spencerian philosophy which regarded the intuitive and all other psychical faculties as insoluble enigmas. On the contrary, it is affirmed, they are plain human attributes, capable of utilizing divine or ghostly communications for the instant good of the will and the mind. Unlike some preachers who are saturated in procrastination, the exponents of these cults have been quick to detect the longings after the invisible and the mysterious, which were discounted even in the Church by the prejudice of liberal clergymen against the supernatural. Traffickers in its wonders played skilfully upon those longings, which mere reason cannot satisfy nor unbelief quench. The student who is pledged to uphold Christian spiritualities does not require to be told that he should carefully distinguish between these spiritualities and the recrudescent forms of modern cultism. The latter severally present a maze of contradictory ideas which will try his patience, because none of them has the happy reconciliation of

knowledge with belief to which they lay claim, and not a few call to mind the saying that superstition is the worm which exudes from the grave of a buried faith.

Spiritualism has made a perceptible advance since the conclusion of the late war, and not a few of the clergy have pronounced favorably upon reported communications from those who have passed from the life of the flesh. The more severe clerical thinkers animadvert against what has been described as "the pitiable revival of necromancy in which desolate hearts have sought spurious satisfaction." Doubtless the task of imparting to multitudes of mourners the comfort they craved has had much to do with the renewed interest in existence beyond death. If that existence actually manifests an increased capacity for impinging in any way upon the present world, the question at once becomes one of evidence concerning which you should preserve an open mind. A single hint of the survival of the soul found in all the unsavory methods of the clairvoyants, or one ray of light in the mass of repugnant spiritualistic phenomena, well deserves scrutinizing examination. So far as I have been able to learn, the descriptions of life after death by those who are said to have broken the silence of the grave are a melancholy disappointment when contrasted with the exultant glories of the Christian Revelation. In any case, it is more requisite now than ever that you should herald the truth that Jesus brought life and immortality to light in the Gospel.

Katharine Tynan dwells on the morbidness of cultured people who have abandoned Christianity, and remarks that she has seen the "emancipated" daughter of a bishop swoon because she caught sight of the new moon through glass.[2] Her observation of the underworld of faith is corroborated by other writers who describe similar instances. Yet that underworld cannot be lightly dismissed, since there is much genuine faith centered in it, and though you pour the acid of critical scorn upon its phantasies that does not destroy them. For notwithstanding their rejection of logic, of rationality and his-

[2] *Twenty-Five Years: Reminiscences*, p. 287.

toric restraint, these various cults have either an idealistic side or an element of reality which postpones their ultimate dismissal. Meanwhile their priests and priestesses are idolized by their votaries and serenely shelter themselves behind that loyalty. Their teachings are often obscure to the last degree, —incantations and not arguments; effusions the meanings of which are lost in rhetorical fog. Their efforts to erect these rhapsodies into an arcana of scientific certitude are not to be seriously entertained. The extraordinary lure they have for a type of mind which is prodigal of marvels and disdainful of facts is due to their ambiguous utterances about hidden things and to that dabbling in the pseudo-miraculous which has never advantaged genuine religion. This passing vogue of esoteric cults has its lessons for us who inherit the great realities of Revelation and preach them to others. The Hebrew prophet protested not only against soothsayers and pretenders, but against the ambassadors of God who stood not in His counsel, or they would have caused His people to hear His word and to have "turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings." [3]

If the Church would save our generation from the folly and loss of false religious teaching, which more often than not is the more dangerous because of the half truths it embodies, she must herself repair to timely instruction in order to overcome error and fanaticism by a faith luminous with the light divine. The necessity ever remains that the mind of the Church shall be under the control of the Spirit Whom Jesus Himself promised for her enduement; for her thoughts, words and deeds are intended to convey not only the Divine Law, but the Divine Mind. And if this Mind is to prevail, Christians must steadfastly nurture a type of faith far stronger in its possibilities than is common at present. Sir Rabindranath Tagore's contrast of the opulence of the East with the poverty of the West in phenomena of the spirit serves to remind us at this point of the holy stillness in which the Paraclete imparts to earnest and prophetic men the secret of their sway. The gifts

[3] Jeremiah xxiii: 22.

He bestows, the counsels He inspires, the words He authorizes are vital for our mission. They have an unparalleled record in the planting, training and progress of the Church, and are the only certain guarantees of her further growth and final triumph.

Other sinister effects of the lack of sound Scriptural teaching are seen in the low ethical standards of many professed Christians who persistently view their creed as a thaumaturgy rather than a method of goodness. Mormonism is the foremost modern example of this evil; the outstanding instance of lawless religious emotionalism. It reveals an astonishing development from those atavistic causes which operate most freely in pioneer territories drenched with religious primitivism and excitement, while utterly oblivious of the intellectual grandeur and moral dignity of the Christian Faith. Foul tyrannies lurk beneath sanctimonious propositions which ensnare those who, once they have drawn the poisonous draught, must needs drink it. Beware of uncommon experiences which controvert the universal witness of the Church; of revivalistic outbursts which raise the ghosts of heresies as old as religion; of the perversities of bibliolators who quote the Scriptures to suit their notions. Even if the Bible were in every particular an infallible revelation, it is manipulated in such cases by notoriously fallible custodians whose use of it is unmistakable proof of the exasperating risks of ultra-orthodoxy. Their labors have too often resulted in error and schism to command our respect and confidence. The need of a spiritualized Faith, of an authoritative creed, of an ethical superiority, which guarantee themselves, cannot be met by hortatory appeals. These appeals must themselves be based upon fundamental moral and spiritual doctrine derived from the principles and ideals of the New Testament, if they are to serve the purpose of the Church. Those who ignore this process have much to say in which we can acquiesce, but some things they aver are not corroborated by the facts which divide and compound life's varied phases. It would be an interesting experiment to apply the ethic of the Gos-

pel to those churches which hitherto have minimized it in behalf of periodical waves of revivalistic passion.[4]

Religious negativism, not less than religious fanaticism and reactionary piety, is another tendency of the times which militates against preaching. Many people of correct tastes, moral refinement and a generous appreciation for the best elements of existence are separated by it from the Church which can ill afford their loss. We constantly hear of vivid, humane, gracious and commanding personalities who have sought every source of spiritual enlightenment except the true one. Nothing more sadly significant for the thoughtful preacher appears in literature than the admissions of accomplished and reflective minds which have reluctantly turned away from Christianity. One of the latest and most notable of these recessions was that of Henry Adams, son of the great ambassador of the United States to the Court of St. James during the critical years of our Civil War. He speaks of the problem of life as classic in the simplicity of its appearance to his youthful heart. Politics offered no difficulties which could not be overcome while the moral law was their surety. Social perfection was inevitable, since human nature traveled steadily toward that goal. The suffrage, common schools and the press were the three instrumentalities of the best possible civilization. These matters this worthy scion of one of New England's patrician families was forbidden to question. Education was divine, the Socratic doctrine that knowledge is virtue still held good and would presently be the universal remedy. The clergymen who dominated the society he knew were never surpassed, as he supposed, in virtue of life and character. They insisted on no dogma beyond those already named, which, in truth, were at bottom dogmatic enough and carried the creed of liberalism to its ultimate conclusions. These led, in Adams' case, first to his rejection of supernatural religion and then to incurable doubt. He read his Bible, attended the Unitarian Church on the Lord's Day and believed in a mild, innocuous Theism. But neither to him nor to his brothers

[4] Cf. Oscar L. Joseph: *Essentials of Evangelism*, p. 103 ff.

and sisters was their religion ever made real; even the easy yoke of their household faith was thrown off at the earliest opportunity, and they never afterwards entered a church. The grand instinct for worship had vanished and could not be recovered, although this mourner over its absence ransacked heaven and earth to find it. He wondered why so powerful an emotion should be obliterated, and was bewildered by the fact that the most intelligent society in the land, led by the most learned clergy, in the most moral conditions he ever knew, should have been so utterly indifferent to the sublime themes which have agitated human consciousness from its birth. The explanation is that the propensity for their stultification had been nurtured to the utmost by a persistent spirit of negativism, and the outcome was a great nature mutilated by the unwelcome skepticism which, as he confessed, laid no old specters but raised many new ones.[5]

It is needless to comment at length on these candid disclosures by one whose secluded habit intensified his pessimism. Nor do I attempt to estimate how much a discreet accommodation of his individuality to surrounding circumstances would have saved Mr. Adams from the wearying pursuits he successively discarded. But it is a fair inference that had he known God as another illustrious but persecuted publicist and patriot, Mazzini, knew Him; had he been taught from the first that religion was the life of Christ in the souls of men and that they who live in Him find the saving grace of all sects and creeds, the fount of social sympathy and betterment, Adams might have transferred his remarkable gifts to ways of unusual helpfulness. Be this as it may, the learning he acquired was no restorative for his malady, albeit its moral tonic kept him fastidiously free from any dereliction of conduct. What knowledge could not do for him, it could not do for the eighteenth century, to which in matters of faith he belonged. In that age the intellectuals became the prey of infidelity; the clericals, of indifference; the profane, of license and blasphemy; and the proletariat, of debauchery and lawlessness. For as it has been

[5] *The Education of Henry Adams*, pp. 34–37.

observed, when good sense, even the best good sense, sets to work with the material of human nature and of Divine Revelation to construct its own religion, the utmost it can achieve is an ethical code for private observance, and there its ability will end. The miracle of Divine renewal will embarrass it; and its failure, which is repeated on a large scale in our own time, will demonstrate that some higher organon is necessary for the establishment of a transforming, purifying faith. Private and public life can only be permanently upraised and blessed by the renewal of its consciousness of God. This we know, if we know anything at all, and this we must teach the more carefully if we believe that the whole structure of civilization, and of the Church and Kingdom of Christ, is entirely dependent upon its acceptance. The most advanced ideas of radical theorists have provided no practical substitute for the Evangel of which Christ is the personal center.

III

There remain several other sources of difficulty confronting the ministry of which it is well that we should take note; viz., the assertive individualism of the time with its strong dislike of authority, the non-existence among multitudes of any Church-consciousness, and the sectarian divisions of Protestantism. Whatever else the people lack to-day they are amply supplied with information as to their rights, while those who counsel them to interpret those rights wisely are far from receiving the attention they justly deserve. Advice that savors of restraint is not widely welcomed at present. And the prevailing dislike of restriction of any kind is the prologue that anticipates the opening of a momentous drama in the history of mankind for which the stage is even now being set. The shadows of its realities are projected upon the curtain of the near future, in which changes of enduring importance are about to occur. In politics, anarchism has capped the climax; in philosophy, practicality asserts itself as the touchstone of truth; in education, knowledge is frequently nothing more

than the tool of material gain; in religion, denials and counter denials have a large vogue. Specialism has supplanted proportion in the methods of learning, and those who practice it are sometimes no safer guides than the humanists who repudiate the accepted standards of art and literature. Statesmen confess that situations confront them for which there are no precedents. The general behavior of society reveals its inward bewilderment concerning even fundamentals. The salvation of the social order depends upon its solidarity, intercommunion and harmony; but how can these be secured while an extraordinary development of fragmentary interests, sects, groups, classes and their antagonisms hold the field? The militant discontent which protests against every kind of rule, and clouds the vital connection between freedom and law, fermented in sporadic and perplexed ways below the surface of pre-war life. Upon these divided elements the shock of the European conflict fell to imbue them with new abstract ideas and to bring new leaders to the front. Such events may tend to the re-adaptation of your message but surely they have intensified the need of it. For the war has left us as it found us in many essentials, and we must make it our business to prevent the further sway of those selfish ambitions, jealousies and fears which were the causes of past tragedies. If the tranquillity of Christendom is to rest upon something more stable than an inertia like that of fierce beasts of the jungle while they retire untamed to lick their wounds, nations will have to change hearts as well as constitutions and frontiers. The ruin we survey has one of its malignant sources in a virulent egoism always disastrous to religious and social welfare. Attempts to reconcile the good of the individual with that of the whole are yet in the predictive stage and can only promise that, after further growth, the primitive selfishness of man will make way for universal fraternity and right. In the meantime, a reconstruction far more revolutionary than reformers had anticipated threatens the present order, which is entering upon an age of far-reaching experiments, the nature of which Time alone can decide. The efforts of systems of collectivism

and of democratic states to mitigate the abuses of unrestrained competition and to protect the proletariat from exploitation are countered by the dread of paternalism. Ethical thinkers disavow the predominance of self and plead for its renunciation in behalf of communal welfare as the essence of morality. These approximations toward common rights are known as justice, a word which is used by many who seem unaware that it is one of the names of Deity. And unless the authoritative Dictator can be found whose word is final and who can satisfy the questionings which concern not the power that enforces control so much as the right by which that power is exercised, the desired settlement will be indefinitely postponed. Herein lies the opportunity of the pulpit to give the age the guidance it needs, for every question that engages serious thought and divides men is in essence spiritual and can be permanently settled only by spiritual wisdom. The interpretation of life in spiritual terms is the one solid hope for the world's future and the only reason for the existence of the Christian ministry.

Many are asking why Protestantism cannot display the superior wit which solves the standing riddle of freedom with obedience. Here you contend with the opinion, driven deep by current discussion, that the authority of the Church serves no other purpose than to harbor absurdities, pretensions and bigotries, which is as far from the truth as the assertion that it has always been a righteous regimen. Both views are adverse to pulpit influence and explain the exaggerations which on either side of the controversy voice unfortunate prejudice. It is a decided gain when sober and open-minded men hesitate before dogmatic assertions, examine the reasons for their ecclesiastical beliefs and make sure that they correspond with the evidences adduced in their behalf. There should be no schism between authority and freedom, which are complementary when accurately defined and understood. Society implies an order which begins and ends with liberty, "passing from the simplicity of that freedom which obeys lawful authority to the freedom of mastery to which such obedience leads." [6]

[6] Principal W. T. Davison: *The Chief Corner-Stone*, p. 14.

Law makes for liberty when it is righteous law, and it is a truism to say that perfect obedience to a perfect law would mean perfect liberty. Between these polarities of authority and freedom men find through their obedience to the laws of God that perfect freedom to which His service leads. There are many prostitutions of power but they can never be authority because such perversions are not rightful power but tyrannies; and of all tyrannies those which have corrupted idealism are the most cruel and pernicious. Yet one often measures the heights from the depths, and the validity of legitimate authority is seen in the contrast presented by its degraded imitations which are now being used for the strangling of civilization. As ambassadors of God we are chiefly concerned, however, with efforts to thrust down the soul to a subsidiary level, and thus deprive it of its supremacy in creation, or deny it even the importunities of its own life. Such efforts, by whomsoever made, recoil upon their makers, but the danger of the recoil is not confined to them. It is often most active in those violent extremes where ethical and religious interests escape all jurisdiction and assume the fantastic forms that betray every sort of progress. The severance of Church and state, the implication that the Church is subordinate to the state, the differentiation between the loyalty you owe the Church and that which you owe the state, are further and relevant issues of this absorbing theme. And what is to be the future relation of Protestant Christianity to the state is by no means clearly defined at this time.

Not without justice is the Church admonished that she must first set her own house in order before she can reasonably expect to bring harmony and peace to a divided world. Her foes mock at her divisions, her truest friends deeply lament them; for it goes without saying that our divisions have become, whatever they may have been in the past, major sources of weakness. This is not to deny the efficacy of many differing forms of Church polity which have embodied in varying degrees the wisdom which comes from above and have reflected not only the idiosyncrasies but also the just demands

of men. Yet when we attempt to separate the living tissues of their truth from the foreign substance of their error, do we not often find them so interlaced that to remove the one imperils the other? For if it be true that Catholicism has lingered far too long over traditional expressions of Christianity, it is equally true that Protestantism has been somewhat oblivious of their practical values. The unhistoric temper which prompts sectarians to regard the period between the Apostolic Age and that of Luther as "a night of unclean things" is slowly passing. It has kept us from sympathetically noting the affinities which the different developments of Christianity have for one another. The procession of the ages begets in those who watch its wondrous unfoldings the virtue of tolerance; it cultivates the historic perspective which is the preacher's criterion, without which he magnifies the trivial, slights the important and inflames the antagonistic. It indicates that this gigantic problem of running order through chaos, discipline through freedom, unity through multiplicity, has always been, and perhaps always will be, the test of the Divine Society; the moral not alone of religion but of every undertaking and economy of life. The Puritanism to which we are devoted, excellent as it was in protest, notable as the architect of free communities, must find the goal for its freedom not in separatism but in unification. The corrective witness of the Church as a whole cannot be set aside by rampant individualism or negative sectarianism. Doubtless the indwelling Spirit has kept branches and forms from petrifaction, and it is consolatory to know that the life which the Church Universal receives from her Lord vitalizes her divisions according to the measure of their faith and obedience. But this is not sufficient; we must discern in the Church the entire congregation of souls re-born and gathered out of every nation, fused into a spiritual homogeneity, broadly and securely founded upon Christ's Personality and reign, and work and pray for the healing of schism. An informed consciousness of the real catholicity of the Church sees in her past, present and future the outworking of one Divine plan, slowly emergent from

beneath the wear and waste of purely human agencies; a consciousness that esteems her capable of still higher unity, of a more universal loyalty, of a fuller sense of religious obligation and social duty.

We cannot forever be disputing the exact origin of the streams at which souls quench their spiritual thirst. It is our chief duty to replenish those streams that they may irrigate larger areas. And one crying necessity of the Reformed Faith is a doctrine of the Church sufficiently broad and coherent to embody our love and aspiration for her and to secure the loyalty of many who owe her an allegiance they do not render. This would release us from the staggering load of claims, High or Low, which burden sacred truth and defeat catholicity. It would give us a working basis from which to attack the iniquities that have organized while churchmen have wrangled. It would neutralize the sharpness of the controversial spirit by the forbearance of the fraternal spirit. It would bid us probe to the bottom the wounds of the Body of Christ and rid them of their virus in the conviction that they are curable. The world, which refuses to be either entirely Protestantized or entirely Romanized, does not require Christians to enter upon a hollow and transient truce, but to arrive at a just and settled peace. We know that the obstacles appear insuperable and gather strength from immemorial sources. However complete our investigations may be, they are liable to omit or to misconstrue the motives and interests which have given birth to sects and creeds. Their relative merits, defects and environments entail a survey whose dimensions tax the most extensive scholarship. Nor do we for a moment hold that the reckless censure which some cast upon them accomplishes any good. Their historic services to the Faith should protect them against such railing, and the observance of their alignments should chasten personal predilection and stimulate magnanimity. Sectarianism has, nevertheless, seen its meridian; and if it is true that nations must agree or perish, it is equally true that the religious denominations which have been a blessing to many peoples must do likewise

or incur a similar fate. A great schism is said to exist in Chinese Lamaism: heterodox factions turn their praying wheels from left to right, while the orthodox insist upon the contrary motion, from right to left. The points dividing Protestant sects are in some instances hardly more vital. Of course our fears or hopes are subject to the undetermined values of twentieth century thought, but a forecast for the Church compels the conclusion that her prosperity depends upon her encouragement of the growing desire for Christian unity. Should this be summarily discountenanced and the Church refuse to deal candidly with her own past and present for the sake of her future, the Lord of all ages may once more assert His supremacy in surprising ways. The judgment which doomed states that nursed disruption will not spare churches that are heedless of the signs of the times.

Attach the freedom of prophecy which Protestantism has bestowed on you to the determination that the Church must become, inwardly and outwardly, what her glorified Head intended her to be. Dwell upon the constructive truths and forces which consolidate Christianity. Under no consideration turn aside from this course, nor allow the contradictions of either saints or sinners to induce you to modify the Divine authority of the Church as the guardian of the Gospel. The prominence given to tribal cults and covenants has often been subversive of the truth as it is in Christ. Instruct your congregations, therefore, to look with generous hope upon the affairs of the "one flock" to which He referred,—*the flock, not the fold,*—in which He will yet gather all believers. Here there is no basis for the idea on which some are forever harping, that other Christian communions should be absorbed into their own; but there is a Divine authorization of "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" and of the larger organic growth through which it will finally be expressed. Separative factors have had a period of unrestrained praise in which historic accuracy has frequently been sacrificed to eulogy, but at the summit of their influence they did not capture the world to which they were so sedulously presented. National-

ism has proved sufficiently strong to crush an artificial overbalance of destructive imperialism; nevertheless, far-visioned men and women do not feel that nationalism is the ultimate goal of Christian civilization. In like manner, Protestantism has redressed ancient wrongs in the Church, colonized states, kept faith with intellectual integrity, and with civil and religious liberty. But it must preserve the great traditions that sanction the supremacy of the Gospel, and not permit the machinations of political craft or ecclesiastical pride to hinder its mission. Its true function is not sectarian, nor national, nor even international, but supernational, as every advocate of Christ in non-Christian lands can testify. In that consecration to spiritual things, which speaks with the power of the world to come, Protestantism will find its elevation and strength for every function it exercises in the world that now is.

The Church has her ultimate phase in the supreme Ideal which Jesus called His Kingdom, and many who speak grudgingly of the former use generous terms concerning the latter. This difference of reference is not difficult to understand, if you remember that the desire for doctrinal definitions and exclusions, which has raged with uncontrollable force for the last four hundred years, has had much to do with the divisions already mentioned. Roman, Anglican, Lutheran, Calvinistic and Arminian theologians agreed on little except that there could be no such thing as an open question among Christian men. But non-disputants who felt that in the presence of the epic factors of the Divine economy these refinements and qualifications shrank in value and meaning, naturally took refuge in the idea of the Kingdom, and asserted with truth that it was unthinkable for any part of it to be fenced off from a true disciple of Christ. The quarrels of the dogmatists, which had the power of absorbing their minds and rousing religious and political antipathies, seem short-lived and unimportant when viewed in the light of the eternal cosmos which is being built up by every Christ-like interest of mankind. Carry your thought onward from the scenes of their historic

separatisms into the invisible realm where the great teachers who once reproached one another now dwell together in the fellowship of the saints in light. In that Kingdom they rest in one communion, and there vexations and tumults are at an end. Its all-inclusive hospitality has made it a grateful conception for enlightened spirits, who grew weary of barren controversies and urged that they brought into prominence matters which were as dust in the balances when compared with the truths upon which all Christians are agreed. In proportion to the strength of your conviction that the Church is the forerunner of the Kingdom will the triumph of both be hastened. Yet it is not wise for the preacher to spread his personal efforts too profusely. For the Kingdom is so vast and complex a matter as to be the charge of God Himself. He alone can direct the movements of the whole of life and of the enterprises into which life pours its energies. The minister who best serves the Church he knows best serves the Kingdom he cannot know in its reach and fullness, and certainly no ambassador of Christ should attempt to disrupt their living union.

What can be said of the contribution of symbolism to that union? The pulpit has a premier place in Evangelical Christianity, and the minatory opinions uttered against it have moved some of its defenders to identify the fact of preaching with a sacramental efficacy which has to be sustained by the man rather than the office. It was not intended that the life of the Church should find its only outlet in sacred discourse, nor that her powers as an agent of transmission should be expended in any single method. The symbolism which hallows and adorns worship is welcome to many whose familiarity with the pulpit has not increased its influence over them. This is debatable ground; yet it is firm enough to sustain the argument for the mystical blending of things seen and unseen in the Christian system. The awful Being raised above the sphere of sense is not beyond the reach of sensory perceptions. On the contrary, the Incarnation has pierced the veil, and every appropriation of religious life through the Sacraments

testifies to the invisible sources of grace which they embody for a recipient faith. At the entrance gate of the Christian sanctuary is the rite of Baptism; upon its altar the Eucharistic Feast is spread. The great majority of Christ's followers receive from these ordinances and from the interpretations placed upon them what spiritual nurture they have. No review of modern tendencies which affect preaching and Church unity is complete that does not reckon with sacerdotal doctrine. It is the strength of the traditional churches, and they will more readily admit discussion of any other of their particular tenets than of that one. The democracy of belief and practice to which Protestantism, and specifically Puritanism, invited the Church at large has not been as acceptable as our fathers supposed it would be. The most stubborn obstacle to its acceptance is High Sacramentarianism, and while this retains its hold the dream of a universal Protestantism comes through the Gate of Ivory. A curious ignorance of the theology, the polity and the temper of Catholicism may induce some believers in the reunion of Christendom to think that Rome will abandon her theory of the Sacraments, but this she could not do and survive. On the other hand, the assertion is common that the Protestant dislike of the ultramontane position of Catholic teaching has driven our churches into negative positions concerning the Sacraments which impoverish spiritual devotion. The priesthoods of the traditional churches owe their hold to the fact that their members prefer symbolism to preaching and will trust the altar which offers them redemption rather than a theological "plan of salvation" or a set of doctrinal propositions which many among them do not understand. They have been taught that the Divine life externalized in the Incarnation is still before them and that its sacrifice acts independently of their transient states of mind. For them the sources of religious regeneration are as irrevocable as the operations of Nature; and like these, are universal, not local; continuous, not intermittent: an external ablution in Baptism; an eternal offering in the Mass. The benefits of such an ordina-

tion are obtained in their case by submission to ostensible authority rather than from personal experience.

Those who have no desire to use the most august elements of faith as the weapons of sectarian warfare will discover that the tenacity of the belief in Transubstantiation or Consubstantiation can be found, not mainly in the sense of fear, but in the sense of sin, and in the sense of need for deliverance from sin. If Christ is not present as Saviour in the mystery of the Eucharist, countless worshipers know not where to find Him. There have they been accustomed to obtain, as they believe, that which their souls demand, and in forms which suit temperaments that have always been under a sacerdotal regimen, for which the Mass, so far from being a "mischievous fable," is the keystone of Christianity and the organic life of the Roman Catholic Church.

Protestants are repelled by the assumptions on which this theory rests and the method it employs. It is contended that they not only seriously impair the spiritual conceptions of the rite, but destroy the democracy of believers by capitalizing the dispensations of grace in behalf of hierarchical privileges, and by denying the right of man's approach to Heaven unless through an anointed priesthood. Obedience to concrete objects of faith is substituted for the inward wrestling of seekers, who, like Jacob at the brook Jabbok, invoke for themselves Divine mercy and forgiveness. Their more daring ventures produce those outstanding religious personalities who have known the regenerating power which flows from the soul's direct contact with God. They are not so numerous as the devotees of Sacramentalism, but the purity and certitude of their convictions have made them preëminent in Christian history. Yet the confidence they inspire in us should not prevent our effort to discover the secret of that strength which a legitimate sacramentalism affords. This is the more necessary because the times require it, and it is very questionable if we have it. We are not committed to any theory upon the question, and can exercise our right either to maintain or reject

any of the explanations of the Eucharist, which has been an exhaustless subject of speculation. But its supremacy in Christian worship is in accordance with our Lord's teaching and with the unbroken practice of the universal Church. It stimulates the noblest faculties of the heart and has intimate dealings with its purest affections. Delivered from the clash of warring creeds and administered with reverence, dignity and simplicity, the Lord's Supper enables Christians to realize that, below the surface of historic separations, are regions of personality where believers are united to one another and to God in a larger self, which is their very own and yet common to the brotherhood: the self of each and the self of all. Avoid therefore those explanations which show the pressure of hostile environments, and in your retreat from their obvious errors do not relinquish the affirmative truth of a confessedly Divine institution. The craving for a scientific frontier in the province of devotional theology can yield some of its spiritual essentials too freely, and thwart by its undue preponderance the proper uses of memory and imagination. It then becomes quite as injurious to religion as excessive sentiment. The even mind keeps its balance here by reflecting that a sacramental worship so sacred in its associations, and one that has directed the thoughts of the members of every church to the Eternal Life-Giver, must always be dear to the faithful.

Further, if there is a priesthood of all believers, by virtue of the High Priesthood of Christ, then His ministers receive from Him and through the Church a priesthood which is valid so long as it inheres in that of the Divine Society. You are to be the servants of that Society ordained to feed the flock by the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments. Nothing different in kind from the rest of his brethren, yet first among equals by their selection, the pastor as priest offers their thanksgivings and intercessions to the Father. The Church also is God's priest in the world, presenting to Him on its behalf the praises which the world does not present for itself and spending and being spent in her ministries for mankind. A coördinating ideal of the minis-

terial office, derived from New Testament teaching, giving priesthood and prophecy their due proportion and enabling Protestantism to approach the modern mind with increased authority, would be an incalculable gain. Assuredly there is no need, as some have insisted, to separate these two great offices, nor to array organized Christianity in antagonistic groups which advocate their respective claims. The serener heights of contemplation, which rise above the dust and din of ecclesiastical strife, are accessible to priest and prophet alike, and most accessible to him who combines both in his ministry. Thereby he perceives that the Church is, or should be, not only the interpreter, but the *Alter Ego* of Christ, even as He Himself is God's. She does not flourish, as is sometimes tacitly implied, at the preacher's behest, or for his convenience, but that everlasting life may stream through all her ordered channels, and cause her children and mankind to rejoice in the Giver. Nor is preaching a declamatory ritual to be meticulously observed regardless of its quality or effect. Priest and prophet should blend in a fully equipped pastorate, as they did in the case of Ezekiel. They exist for the Church, not the Church for them; and churches exist, not alone for the edification of believers, still less for the display of erudition or of eloquence; but that the life which is in them as a corporate whole shall be quickened, developed, trained by the sacramental methods Christ commanded and by every other approved avenue of spiritual intercourse.

IV

The popular appreciation of the pulpit would be aided by a system of doctrine at once Christo-centric and catholic. Neutrals and cultists alike trade on our theological variations and frequently find in them an excuse for their inertia or for the adulterations and the substitutes which they offer in exchange for Biblical truth. Hitherto the work of Christian thinkers has been too much restricted by sectarian views and formulas and a more unified doctrinal consciousness would relieve the

embarrassment, which is also felt by preachers who sometimes face inquiring audiences with ammunition that does not explode. I am not suggesting that men should forego their convictions; or that principles, however narrowly conceived, should be secondary. Neither do I contend that pragmatic values are enough of themselves, or that any road may be taken that seems to arrive. Nor is it necessary to concede to those who clamor for a breadth which is thinness, that antiquity and sectarianism are the sinks of doctrine. It must be confessed, however, that the sacred science has fallen into disrepute because theologians have frequently attempted to sustain partisan beliefs by methods that would be held in contempt in any other department of learning. How often clerical assemblies have exhibited an unholy glee over the vain assaults of prejudice upon reality, while they were cold to truth that was contrary to their prepossessions! Of course such conduct was worse than useless, and their hopes were hardly fulfilled before their fears were again upon them. The edifying spirit of veracity, the interplay of knowledge, the oblique uses of learning which lead the minister to breadth and sanity of view have at last obtained a foothold. Yet the unfettered scholarship that moves devoutly and discreetly in its liberty is but preparatory for the larger synthesis which will embody its results in statements free from contradictory speculations and surcharged with the love of righteousness.

Our age asks for these syntheses and evinces a growing antipathy toward critical faculties which are not constructive. The traditionalism that asserts itself in *ex cathedra* promulgations against progress has no better ally than the theologian who leaves vital religious matters in the air. So far from asking for a practically creedless system, men and women manifest an ever growing desire for clear and definite beliefs, standardized by those major truths of revelation which are substantially accepted because they sustain human nature and duty. Not a few of the accomplished doctors of the Church, mindful of this need, have foreshadowed the outlines of a theology which is neither Roman nor Protestant, but essen-

tially Christian. We need not disavow the departure of the Reformers from traditional doctrine as they found it in order to discover anew the purer articles of the Faith. Thanks to their courageous enterprise, these articles are forever ours, but they should be rescued from the clutches of prolonged and futile controversy and conveyed to the public in a manner becoming their unequaled importance. This New Theology, to use a hackneyed title, must be of God; working, as He has hitherto chosen to work, through interpreters whose quest for sacred truth honors His name and exalts His Son. It must be broached in that spirit of reverent devotion by which alone its treatment of holy things can be made profitable. Then the plain people to whom it is addressed will rejoice in it and demonstrate that they are as deeply concerned about religious matters as thinkers who have filled volumes with learned technicalities and subtleties of speech. Such a theology would show that the bonds which unite the infinitely larger universe we inhabit to its Creator are indissoluble. It would combine what we know of Him through Nature, Holy Writ and the Incarnation into one consistent whole, and interpret their messages as the harmonious expression of His will. It would seek the truth in terms of life unified in Christ and verify its conclusions by the experience of the saints of the ages. Above all else, as President Braithwaite has observed, it would relate its tenets to the consciousness of Jesus, Whose personality explains and regenerates all our conceptions of the being and possibilities of man when in fellowship with God.

Representing, as you do, foremost interests of truth and righteousness, it is expected that you will manifest an intellectual and moral fidelity beyond question, and you must match this fidelity against the errant theories that usually accompany the rejection of normal standards. Some of these theories thrive among the simple because they flatter their inclinations, and in so far as the Church has tolerated superstition and ignorance she must share the blame for their ill. The dogmas which nearly a century ago fed religious fanaticism also bred Mormonism, and since then they have had something

to do with the renewal of the various cults of our day. Half truths or wholesale errors frequently originate in churches which stagnate in the lowest forms of worship or refuse to accept the verified conclusions of modern knowledge.

In conclusion, the inference is plain that times of tragedy, for all their darkness, flash radiance upon man's upward progress. This progress is not to be achieved without the patience and the labor required for the welding into one coherent whole of the diversified elements which have been mentioned here. Ill-regulated people, in whom are riot, confusion and despair, may decline the ventures of faith. Exclusive ones, who, once they adhere to a doctrinal theory, will hear nothing against it, and who disparage any discoveries which seem to discredit it, may remain immured in their impotent conservatism. Impulsive ones, who have not taught their tongues to say, "I do not know," may vehemently protest that they need no guidance. Nevertheless we do, and those who share that need are, with us, being led by the Spirit of God to the re-occupation of a Faith that shall flourish and bear much fruit because it is rooted in Christ, in sound reason and in the realities of being. Beyond the misunderstandings, the schisms, the heresies, the false policies, the deceitful expediences, the sterile deserts of feuds and hates in Church and State, the lover of his generation discerns everywhere the reassembling of the Lord's children that they may enter the promised heritage. He will assuredly bring them to the place of their desire, to the earthly abode of peace and righteousness, where whatever they have hoped and dreamed of good shall exist, not in its appearance but in its reality. There is that richer self-realization, both for individuals and for society, of which even all service is a by-product. And there the Church, raised up out of all the churches, shall stand massively amidst many ruins, as God's citadel of holiness in word and deed in the world that now is.

CHAPTER V

PRESENT DAY INTELLECTUALISM AND PREACHING

ON WISDOM

At the first she will walk with him in crooked ways,
And will bring fear and dread upon him,
And torment him with her discipline,
Until she may trust his soul, and try him by her judgments:
Then will she return again the straight way unto him,
And will gladden him, and reveal to him her secrets.

Ecclesiasticus iv: 17, 18.

CHAPTER V

PRESENT DAY INTELLECTUALISM AND PREACHING

The modern mind—Science and theology—Indictment of the Church—Influence of science upon thought—Limits of science—Progress determined by its ethical nature—Change in philosophical temper—Bergson—Eucken—Pragmatism—Pessimism—The verdict of faith—Intellectual honesty—A cultured ministry—Intellectualism and spirituality.

The spiritual difficulties of the modern mind have been created by the fact that it has found itself situated between two sets of teachers and guides, neither of whom could really satisfy its demands. Scientific inquiry has placed the average thoughtful man in a painful dilemma. It has sapped religious authority while at the same time it has proved incapable of supplying out of its own knowledge the truths the soul requires. Why should science seek to verify the spiritual phenomena for which it does not and cannot have valid proof? We can heartily respect its intellectual attainments and rely upon the information it imparts, but the deepest meanings and purposes of existence are beyond its plummet; and notwithstanding the high qualities which scientists have displayed, such as courage, perseverance, devotion to freedom of thought and reverence for ascertained truth, they have utterly failed to give men an adequate philosophy of life. On the other hand, where theology has capitulated to science and no longer disputes its established claims, the capitulation has too often been sullen and reluctant, in some ways less candid than the stiff-necked conservatism of churches which still maintain a useless defense of exploded theories. The intentional ignoring of intellectual difficulties and the conspiracies of silence about them which have characterized the dealings of theolo-

gians with science have forfeited sympathy and respect. The resolution of those difficulties in a higher unity has been postponed in deference to orthodox susceptibilities, with the result that unreconciled factors have been left in suspense, or falsely compromised, or are still fiercely debated. Professor E. A. Wodehouse, in discussing this question, insists that the churches have passed out of touch with the thought movements of the age. "They no longer mould public opinion; they have ceased to lead; in a period when so much of the profoundest importance is going on in every department of life their voice is practically dumb. It has indeed been a matter of general comment of later years, how, with problems gathering on every side, the churches have had no practical solution to offer; how, in time of disturbance, they have conspicuously failed to be, what we might have expected them to be, agencies of harmony and peace, strong enough to impose a higher ideal upon the struggle of conflicting selfishnesses; how, in a word, they have seemed to have no message in particular for the age in which we are living, but have continued to move in their own little world of retrospect and quotation—remote, unreal, aloof —with few words of comfort, no word of explanation, none of elucidation for those struggling with the strong realities of outer life."[1] One does not have to acquiesce in this extensive indictment to admit that the ardor of a vital faith is no longer with us, and that there has settled down upon religious teaching and effort too much of the chill negation which always marks the absence of firm and positive beliefs. In this atmosphere the Christian pulpit is summoned to what may prove to be the greatest enterprise of its history. To the spiritual hunger which surrounds it on every side, whether avowed or unavowed, has been added a sense of desolation and almost of despair. The age has gained much, but it has well nigh lost its own soul, and, in the sequence, whatever it has gained has been heavily assessed.

We do not concede for a moment, however, that the religion of Jesus has failed, or that it will become less of a solution

[1] *A World Expectant*, pp. 46–47

and more of a problem as time passes. On the contrary, it has yet to be fully and fearlessly expounded and applied. It will remain undismayed so long as faith wells up in the human heart and continue to perform its indispensable work while the elemental needs of humanity endure. Its superabundant life cannot be repressed, and if checked in one place, will break out in another. This determined flow and difference of direction need cause no alarm so long as the center of life's gravity is in Christ, in His Church and in the ministry which He has appointed. Though some of its extraordinary ebullitions assume novel forms and permeate social and intellectual movements in a manner foreign to received prescription, we are not to condemn them but to broaden our sympathies and policies until these absorb whatever Christ has sanctioned. The war He wages against unrighteousness defies all calculations. Its unforeseen sequels develop fresh phases of thought and action. We are mastered by its events, and must adapt ourselves to their course. For these and other reasons the controversies and changes attending Christian progress are not nearly so formidable as they appear. Many of them originate in mere friction, and others are created by the vitality of Christian faith, which is an organic growth that retains its virility while its successive manifestations vary. In like manner social phenomena may appear mutually opposed and yet prove coöperative: rival political and economic factions are members of one body, and the nation has but to be threatened in its life for the contending groups that constitute it to unite as one man in its defense. As is the nation, so is the internal constitution of the Church. Theological and ecclesiastical parties regard her creeds as fixed or flexible; yet their disputes have more violence than venom, more semblance than reality. Outsiders who do not know the Church well, or zealots who know nothing except their own opinions, magnify the importance of these dissensions. Despite them, Christianity lives; and because it lives it moves upward in the scale of life and, therefore, of complexity and variety. Mark its growth in seasons of agita-

tion when it has expanded rapidly by reason of active opposition, and again its decrease in seasons of comparative tranquillity when not infrequently it has become lethargic and lost ground.

The modern mind often speaks of the Church and her ministry as though they expressed nothing more than human designs. The tendency to make the question of their survival and fitness one of voluntary action dependent upon Christians or non-Christians, and to suppose that, in the last analysis, religious history is merely the record of that action, prevails in the pulpit as well as outside it. These one-sided conceptions ignore the truth that the human will cannot operate in any laudable direction unless it is energized by the indwelling Spirit of God. How much less can it visualize, let alone attempt, the world's evangelization apart from His aid? Behind the tumult of every era the devout recognize His silent ministry, which implants saving truth in individuals and nations. Wonderful as are the miracles which have been wrought in men they are eclipsed by God's saving ways among the nations. Every student is aware of the Providence which has been "the great corrector of enormous times," the "shaker of o'er rank states," using foreordained instrumentalities to promote one sovereign will, to thwart vast projects which prudent or predaceous leaders indorsed, to grant to causes they ridiculed or persecuted an inexplicable eminence. Surely the spiritual destiny of man is hidden in the deep counsels of the Almighty, and kept intact by the Power to which all must ultimately submit. These reflections steady our attempt to understand the modern mind to which we have to give our thought, our imagination, our soul, that we may know and serve it without partiality or timidity. For though the spiritual facts and forces within and around us, which indicate the character of God's government, are very liable to be misconstrued, they, at least, justify our confidence in its absolute rectitude.

Those facts and forces lie at the root of what is loosely called modernity, and have far larger meanings than any ideas em-

ployed to explain them. Why, then, should we speak of the modern mind as illogical, capricious, irresponsible; as a cross-country mind with a sort of steeple-chase philosophy that bounds buoyantly over all obstacles and takes short cuts to coveted conclusions? Probably these criticisms are true as far as they go, but they do not go far enough; they neither do justice to the modern mind nor serve the aims of the Christian preacher. There are phases in contemporary thought that cannot be correctly described as thinking at all, but as a conglomerate of misleading notions about religion, philosophy and science, which will not down, despite repeated exposure. Yet these phases are no more than surface motions on a sanitating ocean of reflection, in which are contained the reservoirs of renewed life and power. Even their most arbitrary declarations are best met not by epigrammatic sparring but by the sincerity and fairness of those who are sure of themselves and of their message, and can afford to be magnanimous. Nothing is gained by fostering such an intense dislike of one's own times as inflamed Carlyle, distracted Newman and has hurt a host of lesser spirits. The rage against modern thought has sometimes been the feeder of social and religious bigotry and impotence. To be generously appreciative of that which in current thinking aims at the right is but intellectual courtesy; cordially to accept that which in it is confirmatory of good is but intellectual honesty. I am aware that the extravagances of some twentieth-century oracles annoy sober people; yet how often are they the surplusage of ways of thinking that are as typical of our age as the thinking of the Greeks about Fate was to them.

After all, the modern mind, with its excellences and defects, be it for or against us, is *the* mind with which we have to do. It has reactions and radicalisms, some of which are wise and some foolish; but it is all we have as the theater of our specific task. Touch it at its best and you perceive that it is thoroughly alive; progressive in much that is admirable; wisely conservative beyond the liking of some progressives; thoroughly aware that the letter kills, but the spirit gives life.

Such a mind deserves something better from us than either dogmatic refutations or the parsimonious references which make a great deal of preaching negligible. Inquire upon this point how much of the present distaste for sermonic utterance has been caused by the obstinacy and prejudice of orthodoxy no less than by a heterodoxy averse to the wealth of acceptable tradition, before you decide to have nothing to do with intellectualisms against which we are warned by certain schools of piety. These intellectualisms are the fruit of that revolt against absolutism in Church and state which established the freedom we to-day enjoy. From Roger Bacon onward its advocates were wedded to knowledge, not for itself alone, but for its humanitarian and practical benefits. The endowments we inherit from them in the arts and sciences have enthroned inductive reason in seats once occupied by mediæval theologians and philosophers. There were drawbacks, discrepancies, conceits, fancies, which linger on: ratiocinations which made the human brain the god of everything. Religion, ethics, language, the universe, even Deity, were to be apprehended aright by the vigilant practice of unaided reason in a spirit almost of defiance.

> "No dream, no prophet ecstasies,
> No sudden rending of the veil of clay,
> No angel visitant, no opening skies"

were asked for. Nevertheless, they came and come yet, and wise husbandmen of the Christian Faith who plowed with the oxen of a mundane metaphysic turned to fruitful account the things supposed to be against the Faith. Religion is now seen to be far more than an alluring ideal of the twilight zone of thought which every one is supposed to revere and few are expected to attain. It has its definite laws and permanent types, which pass through regular stages and issue in assured consequences. Its mystical, moral, rational and authoritative elements are analyzed and classified. The canons and standards of the modern mind have been applied to all forms of ancient beliefs. The scientific exclusion of myths and legends

has been enforced. Doctrines of every kind have to show that they are not thinly woven speculations but conclusions linked with verities and sustained by the facts they formally state. Trustworthy comparisons are instituted between the historic and literary religions of mankind. These comparisons convince us that the spiritual consciousness has been the coherent and solidifying force of the social order; and, further, that if the social order were perfectly equitable in all its arrangements, its freedom and justice would still have to depend upon the nurture which religion supplies.

Nothing natural to man could undergo the ordeals religion has endured in struggling toward a greater clearness of conception concerning God and the race without having painful as well as joyous experiences. Society now and always, whether it is to be ruled or educated, simply suffered to exist or divinely redeemed, is an endless problem. Yet the might and exhilaration of Christianity can be ascribed in part to the resistance of society. The meal is never the leaven, or for what is the leaven meant? It is one of the distinctive features of the Evangel committed to your care that it has emerged triumphantly from the ordeals to which it has been subjected, and made myriads blessed by ennobling human nature. You receive it stripped of accretions which have often impeded its advance and with its sources clearly traced to their origin in Jesus, in Whom alone are found the spiritual life and truth essential to the highest progress. Do not presume that the number of your hearers who are aware of these advantages is too small to make the fortunes of intelligent preaching. I would suggest that the opposite is true and that the poverty of not a little preaching is caused by its scanty recognition of the rights of the mind. No ambassador of God can respect those rights as he should, or answer their interrogations as they will have to be answered, unless he is alert to the revolution wrought by scientific methods. To be sure, he must sift its gains from its losses and dwell upon its constructive rather than its destructive aspects. There is far more in it than controversialists suspect, who dispute

upon Biblical miracles and the inerrancy of Scripture. Accidental traits do not indicate its essence nor its prospective sway. The bickerings that follow in its wake are partly the result not of the facts it has guaranteed, but of a theology that has practically obscured the immanent Deity of prophets, psalmists and apostles. The tokens of God's presence in His own world were too frequently found in those apparent breaches of His continuous administration which were magnified as miraculous. The sublime utterance of Jesus, "My Father worketh even until now," indicative of His constant attitude, was irreconcilable with pulpit descriptions of the God afar off. Temperamental clergymen were here deficient not in reverence but in reality, and could very well have been more intellectual in their outlook without hurting their sermons. Predominance of the intellect has injured a few preachers, as it did the poetry of Goethe and of Browning, but this disproportion has not generally marked the clerical profession, and your congregations will risk its presence because they are more or less familiar with the epoch-making discoveries that have illuminated our age. The flat earth found to be a spheroid; this supposedly stationary planet a satellite spinning around the sun; the stellar bodies stretching in measureless bulk and multitude throughout the vast void; the antiquity of man as the last and crowning work of God,—these revelations of science have driven wise preachers to seek the foundations of ethical and religious belief not in ontology but in psychology, in the facts of human experience as registered and attested by consciousness. Pulpit power consists in possessing a commanding position as regards your ends; to secure this you must take cognizance of the changes named and, what is even more necessary, of the truth that their chief effects are found not in the physical sciences but in theology, in those consequent and corresponding changes which mould our ideas of the Creator and of His relation to His handiwork. Hence the universe is no longer regarded as an immediate structure raised by fiat, complete and ready from the outset, to be later wrecked at catastrophic

intervals, but as the ever-expanding emanation of the life and thought of Deity, through which He manifests His unchanging purposes that the end may justify the process.

These views do not involve your abandonment of a single truth of Christianity; on the contrary, they leave all its essentials unimpaired. Your declaration of these essentials, far from being restrained by the astounding discoveries of science, is thereby more deeply founded in the nature of things, and thus made more authoritative. The best preaching you will achieve, which in the long run will prove its acceptability to mind and heart, will not be that of pietists who deplore scientific dominancy, nor that of negativists who deny religious mysteries, but the preaching in which religion interprets, and is interpreted by, science; in which faith and knowledge subsist together and reënforce each other. For this reënforcement the times are ripe, and the preacher who harmonizes what he has to say with the validated intellectualism of the age will gain in range and significance of utterance and upraise the souls of his hearers without attempting to infringe upon their mental integrity. They feel, as we do, that the rational universe is a heavenly ordination which should have its place in the general scheme of divinity. For their sakes and the sake of the Gospel let us strive to articulate both Nature and Revelation, while at the same time we detach the Evangel from transient forms and show that the pulpit can feed a spiritually famished world. Every quality of the mind contributory to this testimony should be drawn upon. Sheer thought can of itself hardly decide any of the great questions that determine the religious life. Observed facts and reasoned conclusions go with us but a part of the way that leads to peace and reconciliation with God. Always there remains a No-Man's-Land, which we must cross by intuition, by deep-seated trust and emotion, in reliance upon that subliminal self which is the secret chamber of the Eternal Spirit. Hence, in forming a considered judgment of effective preaching, we have to act not only upon fact and theory, but upon the entire trend of life, viewed as the gift

which is understood only when consecrated to its Giver.

Not a few Protestants of every denomination are convinced that there is a divergence between the creeds of the churches and the actual teaching of Christ. They know that the Reformation was the latest and perhaps the greatest occasion for creedal readjustment, but they contend that the vast increase of modern knowledge makes it impossible to treat the Lutheran upheaval as a finality. We must persevere in reverently reinterpreting New Testament truth in the light of recent learning, and the holy memories with which that truth is associated should urge us to find its highest presentations. For if Christianity is the timeless, universal religion, which assimilates what is assimilable in the faiths of all ages, its evidences must be amplified upon a scale commensurate with its intrinsic grandeur and external scope. This duty has assumed imperativeness during and since the World War. Principal W. T. Davison, one of the sanest of Christian interpreters, has told us that we do not have to admit that the foundations of the Faith have been shaken by the devastations of the last quadrennium. But he also warns us that they cannot be maintained in future by a rehearsal of time-worn proofs and evidences, which have lost their power to convince and persuade. "These were valuable enough in their day, and their inmost truth is valuable still. But every generation should set itself to grapple closely with the spiritual problems of its own time, and out of its own, it may be, tragic experience to draw new strength for a Faith which can never flourish unless rooted in sound reason and in the facts of actual life. It can hardly be questioned by those who believe in God at all that He intends men to learn deeper lessons than they have learned before, concerning His relation to them and their relation to Him, from the cataclysms through which we are passing. And already from amidst the keenest and most widespread suffering which humanity has known for centuries, the dawn is appearing of that new Day of God which is to follow." [2]

[2] *The London Quarterly Review*, April, 1917; p. 260.

Dr. Davison's résumé reminds one of Shelley's definition of the epic as a summary of the spiritual life of an age for the age succeeding. The present situation, somber though it appears, is epical and vibrates with a power that should revive religious principles. The theories of evolution and the conservation of energy are no longer, as we have seen, the sole possession of the scholars; they are also the conclusions of average intelligence. But, running parallel with their wide acceptance, there is a decided movement toward theistic and Christian beliefs. The age, which has been censured for yielding to the spell of science, has, notwithstanding, been most strongly influenced by the spirit of Jesus. The signs of the times point to an era of faith which will usher in a great and gratifying advance. In this connection it is interesting to observe that no sooner had the critical method laid baseless tradition low and elevated reason than it proceeded to treat cavalierly the faculty it had set up. The modern mind has consequently become skeptical of reason when it invades the things pertaining to spiritual and moral regnancy; and the bold assertion that reason alone could supply a competent account of creation and of the Creator is now thoroughly discredited. The note of misgiving is audible in the speculations of scientists who persistently attempt to raise the lower importance of the physical order to the perspective of an all-comprehending philosophy. They rest their argument upon premises that are pure assumptions, and nothing could be more erroneous than a logic thus derived, since the closer its reasoning the less possible are its conclusions. Even reason itself, in which such implicit trust was reposed, has been assailed as a fractional and delusive element in the apprehension of reality. When science affects the position of a supreme mentor, or speaks about matters of faith as belonging to the rhetoric of imagination, it loses caste, forfeits consideration, and is guilty of the offenses which scientists have freely imputed to theologians.

We readily acknowledge that pure science is an indispensable factor to which all must give heed. The deliberate and

patient attention it has concentrated on sensory phenomena; the lucid and laboratory manner of its expositions; and the general diffusion of its results, have medicated fiction, influenced art and expressed ethics and sociology in biological terms. Yet it occupies but one among many provinces in an infinite system, behind which lie the complex processes of unnumbered forces and aims. A few gifted souls who watched its modern beginnings and admitted their better side, retained a sense of proportion and withstood its autocratic tendencies. Among these were Matthew Arnold, Clough and Tennyson, who looked upon science as a negative agent, a cause of melancholy, resignation and finally of pessimism. Notwithstanding its advantages, for them it subverted sacred truths and brought with it an ever present sense of loss. Doubtless their anxious fears caused them to overshoot the mark. But while we may disagree with them, we should remember that science has been made in some vital respects the source of impoverishment rather than enrichment to human life. The nominally Christian state which repeatedly boasted its strict adherence to the scientific spirit and method has been guilty of the most heinous and unnatural crimes. The observant preacher will ponder these ferocities; he will perceive apart from their wilful and brutal betrayal of the Divine order, that, in so far as science broaches the idea of Deity at all, it goes no further than the utterly inadequate Greek conception of God as law. Verily, He is law, but He is also love and holiness, justice and compassion; and the scientific conception is safe only when it is subordinated to the revelation of His nature in the Incarnation. The famous Victorians already named, who were styled sentimentalists and dreamers by controversialist cliques, were well aware that moral progress conditions all other progress and determines its character. Not only science, but industry, government, education, and even religion, might claim all progress on their own ground and in themselves. But this, as Principal Jacks observes, would not prove progress as men ultimately have to accept it, unless it can be shown that

these pursuits increase the enduring qualities of human good. As for science, of which we are speaking, it takes back, with compound interest in blood and tears, what it gives, unless it is subjected to the will of God as made known in Jesus Christ. What are its prospects, or those of ethics, apart from His lordship? The one becomes a series of formal inferences without final meaning; the other is reduced to an academic exercise.

Furthermore, a credence as radical as that required by the postulates of God and the soul has been imposed upon science by experience. It has thus abandoned the reckless misbehavior of its adolescence and assumed a sober and befitting deference. The militant weapons it formerly brandished have been laid aside, and it bows in the house of faith where it solicits the hypotheses requisite to its purposes as humbly as does any other creed. This admirable virtue is also exhibited by philosophy, which is now ready to believe that it was made for man and not man for it. Its latest phases are expressive of a hope to obtain wisdom by waiting upon the instincts, the intuitions and the habits of the race as a whole. The prejudice it has often shown toward religion was due to its haunting realization of the fact that "to concede anything true of that great bond, so far from being an armistice, was nothing less than unconditional surrender to a master." Our concern here is only to mention these intellectual movements and their bearing on preaching. Yet when we contrast the mechanical and empirical theories of a few decades past with the idealistic accent and emphasis of to-day, we are tempted to enlarge upon a theme which is not wholly outside our subject. Reflect, for example, upon the Spencerian hypothesis, which but a short while ago enunciated as axiomatic the proposition that fundamental and reasoned belief about a First Cause, an essential selfhood, or the nature of things, could neither be proved nor disproved, but must remain unknown and unknowable. The advocates of this peculiar invention purged themselves of indifference to religion and professed a desire to know its certitudes, but paradoxically

enough that desire was extinguished by their predetermination that such certitudes could not be known. This inference, however modestly worded, was at bottom a subtle concession to the vagaries of physicists who had outrun philosophy. For when the facts of science are assembled more speedily than they can be reduced to order, as was their case, confusion is likely to occur. The ceaseless questionings of the human spirit refused to tolerate the clever negativism for which Spencer and his disciples were responsible. In the inevitable revulsion that followed men swung free of the notion of the unknowable God and of a Creator imprisoned by His own act and deed. The pessimism that attended the idea has been checked, and above all other differences between the relatively older and newer schools of metaphysics we note in the latter a robust confidence which has imparted its generous intimations to the latest thinking. The universe is more open today to spiritual exploration and conquest than it has ever been in the history of thought. The fertilizations of philosophical systems, released from a sterile bondage to material phenomena, and the advantages of a new learning which includes the vital elements of theology and religion are placed at the disposal of the preacher and should fructify his message.

This message, however, he will not apply wisely and well unless he observes world-movements, keeps an eye on the advance of the sciences, hearkens to the voices of current literature and maintains contact with the best minds of his time. These minds are often found in latitudes with which inflexible systems of theological education have made no reckoning. Here such systems lack prescience; since what the historical critic and the inductive thinker have to say, or profess to have achieved, is an open field for preachers. You are not to appropriate their results arbitrarily, accepting those which suit your immediate purpose and rejecting the rest regardless of their merits, but should judge them logically and as a whole, with the love for truth which can always defend its own.

The appeal from the sophistries of a subverted rationalism to the hitherto baffling elements of life itself has been taken

by the two most prominent philosophers of our time,—Henri Bergson and Rudolf Eucken. Both thinkers are alike in their aim to construe the universe in spiritual terms, though they differ in their methods. Professor Bergson, by race a Hebrew, by birth and training a Frenchman, educated in Paris, a teacher in the schools and universities of his native land, displays the characteristics of his origin and environment. Since 1900 he has been a professor at the Collége de France and was elected a member of the Institute the next year. He is to be carefully read, not only for his matter, but for his style, which is lucid and symphonic beyond that of any other modern philosopher. If Huxley gave to scientific treatises the charms of literature, Bergson has done a similar service for metaphysics. Indeed, his genius for expression is at times seductive of his thought and embarrassing to the flow of his argument. Yet the artist and the poet in his make-up are in the main most helpful and enable him to elucidate a series of principles which entitle him to the highest regard as a scientific thinker. This he was practically bound to be, since he is of the Darwinian school, and his theories are based in spirit and substance upon its teachings. Had evolution not monopolized methods, Bergson's system could not have been developed. Its gist, given in his own words, is that "Evolution creates, as it goes on, not only the forms of life, but the ideas that will enable the intellect to understand it, the terms which will serve to express it. That is to say that its future overflows its present, and cannot be sketched out therein in an idea."[3] He is not content simply to reject every form of determinism, but proceeds to make freedom the corner-stone of his system and argues that while science and its results may be sympathetically appreciated, it is living insight and its intuitions which reveal ultimate truth. This thesis he terms vitalism, and expounds it with a wealth of arresting illustration. He does not handle old problems of philosophy so much as he re-shapes the problem of philosophy itself. His methods are entirely constructive; he has sighted

[3] *Creative Evolution*, p. 108.

a new goal: the task of thinkers is no longer the dismemberment and reassembling of a mechanical universe, predetermined in its operations by the nature of the machine; it is the adventurous pursuit of life: full, free, perpetual and creative life, incessantly experimenting in new regions. This is the ultimate reality, the rationale of which is in itself. To know life is to know the supreme thing, the all and in all. Realists who find the explanation of the universe in space and matter and Idealists who contend that the problems of knowledge are within ourselves are thus set aside by Bergson. He maintains that matter is the product of motion and that motion is a mode of life; that consciousness, which is one with life, is its directive force, vital impulse, supernal urge, and life alone is conceived of as all-pervading and supreme. In the lowlier organisms it moves as instinct; in the more highly endowed it comes nearer to reason; in rational beings it issues in intellect, which in turn leads to the theoretical and practical knowledge of the human race. But its creative consciousness is most fully expressed in intuition, which has a deeper, wider, higher range than intellect. Because of its origin as "an appendage of the faculty of acting," the intellect is necessarily incapable, according to Bergson, of apprehending the true nature of life, the full meaning of the evolutionary movement. "Created by life in definite circumstances to act on definite things, how can it embrace life of which it is only an emanation or an aspect? . . . As well contend that the part is equal to the whole, that the effect can re-absorb the cause."[4] Bergson defines intuition as "the kind of intellectual sympathy by which one places one's self within an object in order to coincide with what is unique in it and consequently inexpressible."[5] Through intuition alone man "attains to fluid concepts capable of following reality in all its sinuosities and of adopting the very movement of the inward life of things."[6] Thus we gain access to the su-

[4] *Creative Evolution*, pp. ix–x.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 6.
[6] *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 59.

perior realms of the soul and the spirit, discover new truth and come into touch with reality. It should be noted that in this manifold process indivisibility and continuity persist as the evidences of an all dominating life-consciousness, which is the common source and directive power alike of instinct, intellect and intuition. *Creative Evolution* is thus based upon the hypothesis that the current of life traverses the bodies it successively organizes, and divides itself as one mighty river among its multitudinous products, without losing either volume or force. While Immanence is one of Bergson's controlling conceptions, perhaps when closely analyzed his sole idea, it does not transcend nature. Life and the All are synonymous; yet life is not pantheistic, for Pantheism would identify it with the All. The brilliant Frenchman does not convey in his philosophy any definite conclusions as to personality, whether human or Divine. As late as 1912, commenting upon this he says: "The considerations set forth in *L'Evolution Créatrice* exhibit creation as a fact. From all this emerges clearly the idea of a God, Creator and free, the generator of both matter and life, whose work of creation is continued . . . by the evolution of species and the building up of human personalities. From all this emerges, consequently, a refutation of monism and pantheism in general. But before these conclusions can be set out with greater precision, or considered at greater length, certain problems of another kind would have to be attacked." Professor Foster thinks that Bergson will eventually identify the creative impulse directly with God, but at present his philosophy, as a system, has little or no theological character, although it contains fascinating viewpoints for theologians who find in the creative impulse a fresh method of interpreting Divine Immanence. Certainly if the "elan vital" is as vital as ever, atoms have lost their chance, and upon spiritualized being depends the future progress of the world. Life, as Bergson sees it, is the continuation of an infinite past in the living present. His view of the Time element fortifies the vital factor in religious persuasion, that now is the accepted time,

now the day of salvation. Everything is in flux; nothing is ready made; the psychological, not the mechanical nor the finalist view of creation, is the one solvent of its phenomena.

These scanty references but hint at the breadth and beauty of an idealistic metaphysic which has received wide and serious consideration. Although it has not succeeded in obtaining from the natural sciences on which it rests a foundation sufficiently strong to support all its reasonings, nevertheless, its affirmations are a proper protest against the over-intellectualization of life, and one made in behalf of spiritual intuitionalism. An inclusive unification, such as Bergson attempts, is perhaps impossible in metaphysics, and we do not have to endorse the whole of his famous experiment in philosophy to recognize the vitality of much of its content, which his later writings and the fires of criticism will doubtless amend and purify. For the present it is sufficient to know that he has summoned us from a profitless naturalistic thinking to the contemplation of life and its realities as a whole. Either spirit is the supreme fact, supreme over all changes of process and lasting through them all, or life is to be defined as a mechanical process suffering from the illusion that it is not mechanical. The mechanical explanation of the universe might be feasible if it were not that we poor machines are capable of conceiving higher and more satisfying explanations. For which reason men will continue to believe in a spiritual life, will indeed believe in it more and more with every increase of consciousness.[7]

Rudolf Eucken was born at Aurich in East Friesland on

[7] Few philosophers, not themselves originators of new systems, have rendered as much service to philosophy as Professor H. Wildon Carr of the University of London. He has done for Bergson, with conspicuous ability, what John Fiske did for Herbert Spencer, and Hutchinson Sterling for Hegel; distilling into one compact and readable volume the essence of a teaching diffused by the primary author through numerous books. The most notable of Professor Carr's efforts in summing up the Bergsonian philosophy is contained in an inaugural addressed delivered by him before King's College in the University of London on May 16, 1918, under the title: "The New Idealist Movement in Philosophy."

January 5th, 1846, and has taught for many years at the University of Jena, where Schiller, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel were his predecessors in the paling days of the earlier idealistic movement. Weimar, with its memories of Goethe and his group, is in the same locality. Eucken shows the influence of Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, Kant and Hegel, and his doctrine represents a type of romantic idealism intent, like that of Bergson's, on the spiritualization of the universe. Regard for learning and reverence for religion are manifested throughout his voluminous writings, which open up new vistas penetrating far beyond the closed-in altitudes of crude empiricism. The problem he essays to solve is the reality of the universe as the eternal fundamental which exists amid the diversity of things past and present. He is not so much concerned with the world of matter or with theories of knowledge as with life, which is infinitely greater than mind and far more important than anything else conceivable. His style has no such precision, skill and grace as that of Bergson; indeed, at intervals he is more verbose than profound; but he shares the conviction of his contemporary that philosophers have hitherto reasoned within a circle and neglected the concrete and practical experiences of mankind. In his view, philosophy must have as its main purpose the infusion of the practical concerns and problems of life with a vital religious inspiration. To find the basis and the meaning of life; to stress the significance of human personality and freedom; to read the riddle of existence in order that it may be made not only tolerable but congenial,—these are the aims of Eucken. He discusses in a thorough and sympathetic way the various solutions already offered and asserts that before any solution can be regarded as satisfactory it must fulfil certain given conditions. No true idea of life can be obtained until human freedom is conceded, for without this concession moral being is impossible. Sordid motives are as repugnant to him as deterministic notions; skepticism and agnosticism are ruled out entirely. Religion, Immanental Idealism, Naturalism, Socialism and Individualism are set forth at length.

The first two have tended, in Eucken's judgment, to emphasize the invisible as the reality, while the remaining three have largely excluded it. Naturalism is repudiated; Socialism is found wanting, because it concerns itself exclusively with external conditions and has no soul; Individualism is regarded as insufficient, since it confines man to his inner resources. Idealism, although giving life a more enduring basis, does not relate it to a separate and superior world beyond our own. Despite the great achievements to its credit, religion in its traditional forms is a question rather than an answer; "itself too much of a problem to interpret the meaning of life and make us feel that it is worth living." Eucken concludes that current Christianity cannot solve the difficulties of present human experience. He is, however, a profound believer in religion, which he contends will yet assume new dimensions and take its place as the regal fact of life, wielding a greater power than ever before.

Evidently the probe must go deeper into the eternal mystery. Having set aside previous attempts to unfold its secret, Eucken proceeds to make truth a matter of life and action rather than of mere intellect. He yields somewhat here to Pragmatism, which contends that the test of truth is its value for life. Yet he does not claim to be a Pragmatist, neither is he an Empiricist nor an Experimentalist. For him truth is truth, independently of knowledge or experience, and can never be solely a matter of human judgment or decision. It is gained by intuition through a life of action. Accordingly, he adopts the position called Activism, which has the transcendental traits of Kant, with a modern application and stress. As a historian, it is natural that Eucken should emphasize the outstanding personalities which embody the greatest possibilities of life in every field of human endeavor. The persistency with which the Eternal revealed itself in these personalities, notwithstanding the numberless varieties of temporary and even wrong expressions, deeply impresses Eucken while he lives among the great ones and delves into their past. They demonstrate beyond contradiction what he terms the uni-

versal spiritual life. For though divided by centuries and race from one another, nevertheless in their moral ideas are certain identities which clearly point to a deeper basis for life than human existence at any particular period of time. This constant recurrence in history of a persistent Something, reasserting itself throughout successive generations of mankind, is for him the animating soul of the Universe: the eternal, independent, universal spiritual life; and upon its foundation he proceeds to build the fabric of his constructive and prophetic work, which may be briefly summarized as follows:—Man belongs to two worlds, the material and the spiritual. While the material world is the crown of natural evolution, it represents only a past cycle in the development of a far-reaching design. A greater cycle is now before us, in which the universe is to pass to the spiritual plane of being. In most people there are intimations, faint or strong, of this divine estate; inward strivings after a higher life, revolts against the lower self. It is usually in such moments that the awakened soul glimpses the reality and listens to the claims of the spiritual world. If the response be adequate and sustained, a regenerating experience ensues, freeing the soul from the thraldom of its baser self and enabling it to enter into the kingdom of the spirit where alone it can realize its true being.

The originality, fecundity and imaginative grasp with which Eucken sustains and enforces his principal theme are worthy of its significance. He dwells upon the metaphysic of life and of reality as an entirety, separating it from the metaphysic of the schools. The recognition of the deeper, truer existence, which is one, in spite of complexities; the conviction that all sincere thought contains, at least indirectly, some contribution to truth; the insistence upon an awakening of the duality within us; the turning away from and against self; the spacious conception of the two interdependent stages of religion, with "Universal Religion" demanding what "Characteristic Religion" supplies; and the lofty tribute to Christianity as the highest expression of "Characteristic Re-

ligion'' are outstanding features that give to Eucken's philosophy an unusual distinction which Christian thinkers rightly appreciate. But although he regards Christianity as immeasurably superior to all other Faiths and, when stripped of its hampering accretions, as possibly the final and absolute religion, some of his criticisms and suggested amendments are so drastic, indeed destructive, that their acceptance would result not in the rejuvenation of the New Testament Evangel but very positively in its evisceration. The historic contents of the Gospel cannot be subjected to *a priori* conceptions even of so superior a mind as Eucken's, for, while philosophies rise and fall, those realities continue to evince a vitality which outlives the speculations of the thinker and they carry on the saving work of Christianity in the world. Of Eucken it may be said, as of many another for whose helpful contributions we should be truly grateful, that one must gladly take his gold and reject his dross.

Unsophisticated people, who hold that beliefs of any sort must be judged by their practical effects, incline toward the implications of Pragmatism as espoused by the late Professor William James of Harvard and Professor Schiller of Oxford. Pragmatism is primarily a method rather than a philosophy, deriving its outline from the Scotch metaphysicians. As its name suggests, it finds the test of truth and goodness in actual practice. The overweening confidence of rationalists and idealists in their views, which were often individualistic and temperamental, evoked the opposition of what its adherents term the judgment of common sense, a phrase which indicates the collective sagacity of mankind. It has been pertinently said that it is a superhuman task to tabulate and criticize, in the light of history and experience, the postulates of all human knowledge. Final night closes in upon the thinker before his work has well begun. Therefore, to seize the intellectual arms and equipment already provided for the fray, and to demonstrate their value on the field, is the obviously wise policy for mortal creatures. Yet it is no more than a policy, and is not without its drawbacks. The very simplicity

of this standard of values, while applicable to a degree, is too closely akin to compromise to be the determinative of truth. Pragmatism may feel "its heart to be in the right place philosophically," but this is scarcely a sufficient preparation for philosophical enterprises. It lays itself open to the risks of unregulated emotionalism, the abuses of which have dimmed "the perspectives of the several worlds" and fallen short of that love for reality which is the finest characteristic of the preacher, and the one always to be trusted by the human mind. We can admire the efforts of Pragmatism to upraise and amplify the popular esteem for reflective thinking, and to direct it to the unfailing sources of better life and conduct. But its disparagement of other systems and its light respect for some of the more strenuous obligations which are laid upon them, militate against its usefulness. Notwithstanding its attractive prospectus, especially to the advocate of things which, though invisible, are nine-tenths of existence, it should be treated with reserve and used within limitations.

Another quality which no age altogether escapes, and which austerer minds frequently display, is the pessimism which has deeply infected some phases of modern life. This may be observed in those dissentients from Christianity who unanimously object to the ways it has taken, but are incapable of offering any better direction. Strindberg shrieks out the agonies of his discordant being; Nietzsche commends with repellent frankness an elementary and undisguised egoism; Maeterlinck suggests the quieting of unruly passions by a profounder reverence for the inner consciousness; Tolstoi (to whom not a few preachers have given more publicity than to saints and teachers of their own household) is quite definite in urging Christianity upon us as a system of poverty and communism. They all practically agree with James Mill that life is a poor thing at best, and at the worst a tragedy of which Prometheus is the personification. One writer of this dismal band gravely informs us that Thomas Hardy, England's last literary Titan, carries the race to a terrible

height, where irony is revealed as its law and humanity seems less than nothing. Bertrand Russell in his volume *Mysticism and Logic,* remarkable alike for its noble and moving prose and for its stoical attitude, declares: "Brief and powerless is Man's life; on him and all his race the slow, sure doom falls pitiless and dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way; for Man, condemned to-day to lose his dearest, tomorrow himself to pass through the gates of darkness, it remains only to cherish, ere yet the blow falls, the lofty thoughts that ennoble his little day; disdaining the coward terrors of the slave of Fate, to worship at the shrine that his own hands have built; undismayed by the empire of chance, to preserve a mind free from the wanton tyranny that rules his outward life; proudly defiant of the irresistible forces that tolerate, for a moment, his knowledge and his condemnation, to sustain alone, a weary but unyielding Atlas, the world that his own ideals have fashioned despite the trampling march of unconscious power."[8] This is the lone cry of a heroical heart that has wandered far from the central authority and peace the Christian knows. Viscount Morley, a far weightier character than Russell, is hardly less depressing. No man was ever more disinterested, more unselfish, more truly the soul of honor or the servant of his fellow men, with that fidelity in public duty which is with him instinctive, than the biographer of Gladstone. Yet in the last chapter of Morley's *Recollections* he quotes a line from Tennyson, which seems to him to be the apt image for a creature's epilogue:

"Cold upon the dead volcano sleeps the gleam of dying day."

The worn veteran finds no enchantment of restrospect in his musings on a Surrey upland at the hour which lent its first line to Gray's *Elegy;* the hour "when they who sail the seas hear the evening bell afar, and are pierced with

[8] Pp. 56–7.

yearning in their hearts at the thought of the tender friends from whom they had been that morning torn away." He questions whether a man's life has been anything better than the crossing of a rough and swollen stream on slippery stepping-stones, instead of a steady march on the granite road. He seems to favor the views of Marcus Aurelius, who was not sure what the recurrent motions of the universe were, entanglement, confusion, dispersion or unity, order, providence, a well arranged cosmos, or a tumultuous chaos. He is also uncertain whether the Darwins, Spencers, Renans, who held the civilized world in the hollow of their hand for two long generations past, have perchance wielded a more potent sway than the Gospel of the various churches. With a pathetic *Circumspice* the curtain falls on one of the most influential lives of our time, while for Morley the race is left to the mercy of materialistic decadents and lying diplomatists who have plunged it into a witches' Sabbath of blood.

Other thinkers of less note, intoxicated with suffering or influenced by a darker hue of feeling which they mistake for suffering, cannot look soberly at life. To see it aright, they assure us, is to comprehend and to repeat the *Vanitas Vanitatum* of the ages over the present scene of ruin and desolation. Such saddening confessions remind us that, great as may be the difficulties of belief, those of unbelief are much greater, and that they obstruct the moral conquests which are the prize of courage. To inspire men and women to attempt these conquests is one of the chief functions of the pulpit. Preachers understand that it has ever been essential to every kind of progress that men should grapple boldly with their adverse fate. But these pessimistic spirits look for an inmost relation of things in some rare, remote, emotional state which wavers between science and sentimentalism and is unknown to the rest of mankind. They have little definite to offer except despair, blank nothingness, extinction. The echoes of their lamentations are sometimes audible in the words of millennial prophets who dismiss the earth to doom

to make room for their theoretical paradise. Flowers will bloom on icebergs before men distil moral hardihood and determination out of these errant speculations.

It is with a sigh of relief that we turn from them to the intrepid souls who do not allow their bitterest experiences to overcome their believing hearts, nor unnecessarily vex themselves about the divergencies between the realms of sense and spirit. They know that these differences have been exaggerated, and, further, that they are now well on toward the settlement made by faith and not by doubt. Still less do they surrender to the blandishments of the quack who pledges them a fool-proof universe, nor do they degrade themselves by consorting with the devotees of sensual pleasure. Yet they are righteously exercised over the far-reaching issues of evil, many of which are the more dreadful because they are the needless creations of man's own lusts. They ask the preacher why such misery and waste should recur in a life that mocks them with its fairest prospects and is so full of promise but so scanty of fulfillment. This problem of problems apparently retreats as thinkers advance, and perhaps no generation can do more than move slowly toward its final solution. The interpreter of sacred truth must exert himself to show tortured humanity those higher grounds of harmony which are of God in Christ Jesus. Thirty years ago Bishop Westcott of Durham felt the pressure which has since increasingly come upon us all. He declared that we could willingly endure the delays, the failures, the sorrows encompassing us, if we were allowed, even from afar, to recognize the presence of *Christus Consummator*. There have been saints who have caught the vision of the enthroned and interceding Son of God vouchsafed to the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Their ministry has invigorated and strengthened the Church Universal, by giving a higher visibility to the unity of faith and knowledge which is assured in the sovereignty of Jesus Christ as Lord. It is your privilege to do likewise and to bring to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death the Gospel of spiritual illumination

and immortality, made your own during hours of youthful trust and optimism, that it may fortify your hearers during the night of tragedy and woe.

III

There is a prevailing impression to-day that the pulpit should be more sympathetic in its treatment of the intellectual side of religious questions; certainly it is highly necessary that preachers should know the great work which has been done, not only in theology, but in poetry, metaphysics, history and economics; in short, everything that adds strength and luster to the setting of righteousness. Especially should we acquaint ourselves with the capital intimations of the masters who rivet thought and inspire reflection. Ministers, like some other speakers, would imagine less if they knew more, for although imagination is a chief servant of preaching it is often a bad master, inflicting waywardness and caprice upon enthusiasts who have not learned the distinction between fact and fancy. The verdicts of a trained intellect, working upon a well-founded basis of ideas, answer the ends of the sermon far more successfully than flights of declamation. And if our schools of the prophets are to have any justification, they must meet the requirements mentioned by training men apt to teach, who can show that Christianity contains abundant matter for instruction and is neither a mere intuition nor an arbitrary revelation. It has in it those qualities which are the *terra firma* of the preacher; from these as a base he must recast his sermonic methods to meet the shifting ideas, conditions and demands of life. The minister proficient in applied religion will ward off incredulity, sluggishness, prepossession, misguided piety, and will apply himself to the tasks of resolute thinking. Reluctance to accept and state the assured results of scholarly investigation nullifies the effect of sermons upon the informed hearer, and attempts to dissociate preaching from the realities such investigation necessarily involves, in order that a

temporary effect may be heightened, is as though you threw a tub to a whale. No audience needs it, and those worth while will have none of it. They quickly detect in the preacher the deliberate evasions which becloud preaching, and insist that the Christian message must be founded, not upon the loose rubble of emotional appeal which ministers, like politicians, are especially tempted to use, but upon the solid facts which show your reverence for the ethics of the intellect. Veil nothing in a false reticence; beware of the casuistries which conceal essentials. They are both immoral and stupid, and will never be practiced by preachers who, living by faith and not by prejudice, dare gaze on the naked splendor of verity. That worst of heresies, fear for truth, does not corrupt their utterance. They live and speak in confidence and love of truth, with the language of a lover, candid, full, explicit, and guard against giving the fatal impression that they have no sufficient tenderness of conscience toward facts if these interfere with their idealizations. The unhappy example of not a few divines who suppress facts or openly denounce their proclamation by others, and who show by their taste for vituperation that it grows by what it feeds upon, has wrought incalculable injury to our calling. Strong in their antipathies, large in their self-esteem and their exactions, their pitiful harangues and blustering extravagances have humiliated preaching and brought reproach upon the Church.

If, then, we would counteract doubts, disarm repugnance and find a fresh approach to the one Gospel for the modern mind, let us sustain the intellectual honor of the pulpit, fixing all sincere hearts upon it and silencing the frequent taunt that it plays fast and loose with the results of learning. Its morale is maintained by the purification of scholarly wisdom; by that breadth of nature which does not despise culture for the sake of religion any more than it sets aside religion for the sake of culture. And if you ask that culture be defined, since the term connotes to many only the ornamental as against the practical in mental equipment—surely the answer

is that those ministers are truly cultured whose knowledge and interests give them an intelligent intercourse with the wider interests of life. The laws of motion and of radioactivity are as essentially parts of culture as Murillo's *Immaculate Conception* or Montaigne's *Essays.* The procession of the equinoxes is quite as profitable as the history of *The Thirty Years' War,* and the latest developments of sociological theories are fully as relevant as Futurist painting. Some who insist on a cultured ministry are ignorant of the implications of a term which perforce keeps pace with the extension of knowledge. In reading the sermons and apologetics of the Fathers, the Schoolmen and the Reformers, one is struck with their occasional primitiveness. Many of their happiest ideas, which were the points of departure for overwhelming exhortations that thrilled the souls of their hearers, have become the merest platitudes for our generation. We speak to a world upon which genius has lavished untold resources, a world which has not only the enlightenment but the sophistication of scholarship, and which, after hearing all the prophets of the past as well as its orators, poets, historians and essayists, still vents its dissatisfaction and complains that its aspirations are stifled. To be sure, the beaten paths which great preachers trod are ever before us, and we must follow them as they followed their Lord, though with unequal steps. But if you who enter those paths later than some of us would adorn them with interpretations of the Gospel which appeal to your day, you must conquer much that seems foreign to the intention. Buried monuments, dead languages, ancient heresies, non-Christian religions, obsolete and extant philosophies, methods of textual criticism and exegesis, the exhumed and corrected histories of the Church and of nations—all present their endless stores before your bewildered gaze. How, then, is the student to discriminate between them and select what he needs? Mainly by remembering that the minister's true culture is not conceived in the wits but in the soul. It is a part of that life which you live as the servant

of your Lord, "in Whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden"[9] for every generation. Your relations with culture are constant, not desultory; joyous, not grievous; free, not forced. And whatever in your research brings honor to Christ is your lawful spoil. Carlyle avowed that he who had mastered the first forty-seven propositions of Euclid stood nearer to God than he did before that achievement. To find God everywhere and enjoy Him most, plod along what Sir Thomas Browne described as "the common road, the Appian Way of knowledge." Yet journey there as freemen, not bondsmen; conscious that you have a sacred merchandise in charge, a saving message for mankind to which fuller expression must be given. This is an exertion distasteful to preachers who avoid first-rate causes and high duties and do not build upon the firm rock of the thinker's acquirements. They have usually lost their strength, if not their self-respect, by depending upon native gifts which sooner or later wither and die unless replenished by the incessant study of primary truths. Mr. Asquith, in his Rectorial address before the University of Aberdeen, well said that "a vast deal of the slipshod and prolix stuff which we are compelled to read or to listen to is born of sheer idleness." He went on to point out that the aim and end of culture is "to be open-minded; to struggle against preconceptions, and hold them in due subjection; to keep the avenues of the intelligence free and unblocked; to take pains that the scales of the judgment shall be always even and fair; to welcome new truths when they have proved their title, despite the havoc they make of old and cherished beliefs—these may seem like commonplace qualities, well within every man's reach, but experience shows that in practice they are the rarest of all."[10] Degeneracy is bound to follow neglect to cultivate them and illustrates the aphorism that, while eminent posts make thoughtful men greater, they make indifferent and careless men less.

[9] Colossians ii: 3.
[10] *Occasional Addresses*, pp. 92, 95.

Repel with vigorous determination the heedless waste of your powers, your time, your opportunities; the obtrusion of paltry aims and motives; the cheap solicitations of those who bid you be anxious for everything except the one thing needful, and who act toward preachers as though they were the flies of a summer noon. The concentration of Dante in the solitudes of Fonte Avellana, of Cervantes and Bunyan in their dungeon cells, of Hegel buried in his speculations amid the roar of battle, is a possession of the soul in exile, imprisonment and storm, which we envy because we do not have it. Granted that some great works like those of John Stuart Mill are exceptional in this respect, since they were produced amid distracting surroundings, yet they are no safe examples for you to imitate. The comparative tranquillity required for the generation of ideas, and the intervals when one can turn on the full stream of his thought, excluding whatever diverts it, are too frequently denied the modern preacher. Only by the most jealous contrivance and, in some instances, at the risk of his tenure, can he secure a breathing space for the consideration of truths which must be reborn in him if they are to shine forth through his utterances.

This deprivation has much to do with the popular impression that the pulpit can no longer summon superior minds to its service. Such minds are not abundant in any department of public activity; and the idea that, as a result, nations have got out of hand, is not without support. Yet if it be true that preaching genius is less common than formerly, the fact remains that it can, and must, be grown on earth before it is baptized from above. As the foothills of the Andes begin hundreds of miles from their summits, so the outstanding preachers of any period are borne upward to their eminence by countless ranks of less known but equally deserving brethren. You may not be the Beechers or the Brooks of to-morrow, but you can help to generate the conditions which will produce them for the future. Had there been no love of learning, there would have been no Renaissance; apart from the thirst for the living God, the Reformation would

not have shattered the rock of Scholasticism. The aggregate of qualities mystically infused, which men call genius, is not independent of its environment; and though we may not command the one, we may mould the other, so that after our Elijahs, the Elishas and their successors shall arise. Besides, there is to-day, if not a personalized, what may be termed a distributive preaching genius, which has been advantageous for the far-flung lines it has to defend. It speaks not only to advanced scholars and to the inveterately skeptical, but to the believing and to the unlettered mind, and occupies in social and religious realms extended frontiers of comparatively recent origin. Though no Church discharges its duty to God or to man which does not furnish an intellectualism competent to deal with the conflicts that disturb spiritual faith, it is still more derelict when it neglects the troubled and restless multitudes which need the simple, earnest proclamation of the message of Jesus. While critical theologians and commentators abound, cultured and evangelical men of the type of Hugh Price Hughes, whom Dr. Martineau described as, in his opinion, the best preacher of the Gospel to the people of Great Britain, are few and far between. You increase your ministerial efficiency when you refuse to be the Mr. Bye-Ends of the intellectual world, forever wandering off in pursuit of the latest psychological or ethical theories. The knowledge of them should not be your obsession, and the ambassador of God who allows nothing to deflect him from the conception of all life as an opening for the Evangel of the New Testament has rightly determined his course.

Before him appear all sorts and conditions of men and women, wearied by toil and broken by sorrow. The distractions of business and of domestic care, the grief for the absent or departed loved ones, the consciousness of sin, the yearnings for a better self and the peace it brings, surge around the holy spot where he ministers. He has to renew his people's strength, revive their hope, ease their burdens, and announce to the penitent and obedient the pardon of the All Merciful. For him, as for them, the assurance must be

ratified that the God Whom they seek, and Who cannot be found in an intellectual externalism, is nevertheless present in the Spirit to help and heal. Then it is that idealism is created by forces outside itself, and the supremacy of Christ over all ethical schemes is verified by His actual production of righteous character and conduct. The crude necessities of human economy are there supplied and surpassed by the revelation which is religious as well as reformative. Where philosophy, science and social tendencies, though seeking one end, are at a standstill, the Christian preacher should prove himself indispensable by advocating the great adventures of faith and love, which lead to the new humanity, at whose summit is the Christ able to save to the uttermost both man and society.

The antagonisms which belong to the intellectualism of the age should not prevent you from heralding the Evangel, which presupposes them and which can deal more successfully with hostility than with indifference. The skepticisms, the social problems, the eager questionings already mentioned, are capable of reconciliation as well as of division. Men magnify the visible universe, or fall back upon the moral sense, or denounce social wrongs, not because they are irreligious but because, like the rest of us, they ask for spiritual certitude and growth in betterment. Their theories are sometimes unreasonable, their affirmations often wrong. To deny these is a duty, but to impugn their motives is usually blamable. The idealism and virtue they contain can be attached to the federal Personality of Jesus. Wherever justice, benevolence and goodness are found, there He dwells and gives them a regal hospitality. His universality touches all speculations at ascertainable points, disclosing, even in their remotest recesses, the stratum of the soul, and showing that its infinitudes are of God. Perhaps in overcoming opposition the young preacher, more particularly, has to learn his lesson through preliminary failure. Why should the human drama, with its prolonged and involved processes and innumerable intricacies, be an open book to the minister or

to any other reader of its pages, who scans them for the first time? If he is an unsympathetic man, impatient in temper and limited in vision, he will forfeit the great privilege of harmonizing their apparent contradictions with the moral and spiritual education of his generation. But if he approaches them resolved to make the best possible use of them in the interests of the truths he experimentally knows, he achieves lasting results for the Gospel. It is more commendable to do this well than to direct the political fortunes of a State, or to win the bubble of short-lived fame. The impression of the Spirit of Jesus upon the lives of your fellow men, when channelled through the preacher's consecration, exceeds in permanent value the triumphs of intellectualism in works which the world will not willingly let die. Be responsive then to the times you serve, admiring in them whatever is admirable and rejoicing in their achievements as keenly as you mourn over their shortcomings. The very extension of material things which some preachers are always deploring but erects the larger house a regenerated race will presently occupy. Even those strange epidemics of grotesque or frantic belief that occur in an age like ours are not without their redeeming features. Better the zeal of the Flagellants than the Black Death of apathy. Strong faults are offset by stronger excellences, and tumid vices summon forth the indignant virtues they challenge. Here lies the field ripe for the sickle of the reaper; never was its labor more arduous, and never more attractive than to-day. After all, the physiognomy and movement of the world and its salient convictions and contradictions are on our side, and I rejoice to think that the central powers of modern intellectualism will eventually be turned in all their fulness to religious reconstruction. The static will give way to the dynamic forces for which the last one hundred years, deeply considered, have been a stern nursery. If this conviction has any validity, the Faith will resume its Pentecostal sway and speak once more to all men in the living forms of their own thought and language.

CHAPTER VI

THE NATURE AND IDEALS OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

"O man of God . . . follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of the faith, lay hold on the Life Eternal, whereunto thou wast called, and didst confess the good confession in the sight of many witnesses. I charge thee in the sight of God . . . and of Jesus Christ . . . that thou keep the commandment, without spot, without reproach."

I Timothy vi: 11–14.

"Ideals can never be completely embodied in practice; and yet ideals exist, and if they be not approximated to at all, the whole matter goes to wreck."

CARLYLE.

CHAPTER VI

THE NATURE AND IDEALS OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

Opportunities of the student—The ministry that awaits him—The ministerial office—Sacerdotal and Puritan conceptions—Some ideals of the Protestant ministry—Personal character and piety—Vital preaching—The authoritative message—Justification of dogma—Pastoral relations and duties.

In his *English Humorists* Thackeray enchantingly portrays a Protestant clergyman's career, and declares it to be the most beautiful subject for a modern idyll. The parson appears on the scene like Melchizedek, as priest and king in one person, to whom it is given to guide his fellow men through life, to take care of their spiritual destinies and to guarantee their hopes of a happier future. "Imagine such a man," he exclaims, "with pure human sentiments, elevated above the multitude of whom one cannot expect purity; give him the learning necessary for his office, as well as a cheerful, equable activity, which is even passionate as it neglects no opportunity to do good; and you will have him well endowed!" The great Victorian was here making his own replica of *The Vicar of Wakefield,* the outlines of which can be matched by many ministers whom we have known as exemplary artisans of God. It is not surprising that Goethe in his autobiography confessed a deep indebtedness to Goldsmith's favorite creation, which in a decisive hour became for the great Humanist of Weimar a guiding light. Who among us acquainted with the good vicar, so amiable, yet so resolute and virtuous withal, has not felt a similar impulse?

One finds it well-nigh impossible to overestimate the joy of the golden hours you will devote to diligent study and the acquirement of Christian culture. Do not allow them to be

filched away by lesser interests, nor permit yourselves to be taken out of the hands of the Sculptor who fashions His chosen servants and prepares them for their work. Youth, like Spring, may sometimes be overpraised, for mellower Autumn gives in fruits more than is lost in flowers, but Spring precedes Autumn, or there would be no fruitage, and this is the period to sow that hereafter you may reap abundantly. The religious life has its seasons of fertilization and almost invariably prefers the responsive soil of earlier years. Think of St. Francis, of Jonathan Edwards, of Henry Martyn, of the Essex rustic, Charles Haddon Spurgeon; of many others not less devoted, though less widely known, who passed at a bound while still young to pulpit power. Theirs was the romance that issues in realism, and its risks were justified by its results. At manhood's dawn is given,

> "So much of earth, so much of heaven,
> And such impetuous blood,"

that it is seldom hard for novices to cherish the most enthusiastic beliefs. Before their ardor can be chilled they are immersed in their calling; when disappointments come, they are pledged to it beyond retreat. Youthful impulses are not infrequently mistaken ones, but they more often attain higher things and are better loved than the sedate reflections of maturity. It is an unspeakable boon that you are at an age when you dare to think your own thoughts, to conceive them vividly and to act upon them with alacrity. And since there is no calling which requires so long an apprenticeship as preaching, you cannot prepare for it too rapidly nor too extensively. It is with ministers as it is with trees: if you lop off the branches into which they are pouring their virgin sap, some rough excrescence will always show the wound, and what might have been a spreading oak of liberal shade becomes a misshapen trunk. Walter Bagehot relates that the elder Pitt would not allow his great son's juvenile gifts to be discounted. Accordingly, while yet a mere strip-

ling, his father shielded his talents from those repressions that have crippled many a budding genius. They were deliberately designed for public life, drawn out before intimate coteries and developed to a remarkable degree of precocity. The beardless youth, soon to be hailed as the heaven-born Minister of State, who rose in an astonished House of Commons to throw down the gauntlet to Burke and to confute Fox, owed the ripeness of his preternatural ability to the hearty encouragement he had always received to be himself. A young man may be immature and yet formidable, as Walpole, on an historic occasion, discovered to his dismay. Those more daring ventures which are reprehended by wiseacres who mistake timidity for prudence are sometimes preludes of your best achievements. You do not set out with a perfect equipment, but the interspaces of your present attainments afford room for a larger selfhood and for the development of latent strength and considerate discretion. Older men who have neglected these qualities lose elasticity, and in trying to be sensible end in being commonplace. One hears constant warnings against the rash folly of undisciplined young manhood and assurances that its consequences are unforeseen. These are not to be disregarded, since beyond question one soon learns that it will not do to commence the voyage of the preacher all sail and no anchor. But I have observed that young ministers are averse to this folly; they are prone to be contemplative, and, in their reaction from a natural buoyancy, feel acutely the sobering aspects of their momentous enterprise. Their initial warfare with evil is a heavy drain upon them; faith and reason seem at variance; they are struck with the changes of life, and often illustrate the saying of the shrewdest man of his age, that those who begin with certainties end in doubts, whereas those who begin with doubts end in certainties.[1] If such is your present state of mind, return to the free and intelligent activities of your first love for God, the love which receives rather than produces power and keeps the soul hopeful and courageous. Be

[1] Bacon: *Advancement of Learning;* Bk. I, p. 52.

content to know that the empire of your life and knowledge is widened by sad as well as by happy experiences, and obey the instinct which bids you forge ahead, realizing afresh at every stage of your progress an increasing acceptability to Christ and to His Church.

Surrounded as it is by the rush and urge of the world, in what sphere does the ministerial office really exist now, have right of way, and attain lasting influence? The statesman lives in history, the painter in his picture, the musician in his symphony, the poet in his song. The ambassador of God cannot always be conspicuously reformative or philanthropic. Yet he has an undeniable precedence by reason of the fact that he lives in the souls of his fellowmen, and thus lives because he witnesses to eternal verities which outlast all human pursuits. You will hear the objection that sermons are fugitive productions, few of which are enshrined in permanent literature. This is partly true but in no wise fatal. The spoken word may lack the quality of literature, and yet be instrumental in accomplishing vital results. A single span of glorious preaching, like that of the Reformation, does far more for mankind than ages of benighted endeavor. Moreover, there is no necessary merit in permanence, or some well known forms of transgression would not be so persistent. One could, of course, readily quote a sentence from St. Paul, St. Chrysostom, John Calvin, or Pascal which outweighs in moral power and efficacy the legislative acts of a score of parliaments and congresses. Thousands of orators can talk for one philosopher who can think; hundreds of philosophers can think for one prophet who can visualize the eternities. The seers who were orators, thinkers, prophets, all in one, have been the safest monitors of the race, the mediators of its religion, the molders of its destiny. They understood that its flux meant either progress or decay; that the cause of its evil could be traced to the deep-seated error that men must preserve and not improve their lot; and their predictions of the future were based upon that understanding. You share their privileges, which make the loneliest pulpit in the land

the scene of regenerative forces. Such forces are not restrained by human infirmities; on the contrary, these have accentuated man's sense of need and driven him to his Redeemer. The Biblical revelation has convinced multitudes of their sin, forged the strength of nations, formulated their faith and laws and repeatedly demonstrated that when nations are alienated from its teachings their fairest hopes and accumulations are in jeopardy.

Let us turn now to the vexed question of the nature of the ministerial office, which has divided Christendom for the last four centuries. It is not germane to our purpose to discuss the Roman Catholic view of orders, except to say that the differences which exist between that view and those of simon-pure Protestantism are best understood from the historical and not the theological standpoint. Anglicanism, as a branch of the Church Catholic, has recently emphasized the growth of the Episcopate in such ways as to bring it before your immediate attention, declaring it to be the indispensable center of that Christian unity, which is supposed to be the universal solvent. Obviously, one cannot here treat the issue with the thoroughness its importance deserves, but a few hints upon it may stimulate your interest in the part it has played in the development of the Church and the ministry. Previously to the Oxford Movement sacerdotal theories were latent rather than active in Anglicanism, but after the Tractarians had made their protest against the enervated state of the Establishment, a new type of churchmanship arose, which insisted that Anglicanism was the one true and sufficient source, among English-speaking men, of instruction in faith, worship and morals. The benefits of Divine grace were held to be in the sole prerogative of the bishops, who inherited them by ordination in an unbroken line from the New Testament Church. They and they alone dispensed the gifts of a valid ministry of the Word and the Sacraments. The very existence of non-episcopal bodies was spoken of by extremists of this faction as hostile to Christ's Church, and those who sustained such bodies were regarded as rebels against

her Divine Law who repudiated an essential principle of her continuous life. The weakening of the theory was declared to be impossible, and it was asserted that every link in the chain of Apostolic Succession remained intact. This position was overthrown by a great English bishop and scholar, the late Dr. Joseph Barber Lightfoot of Durham, who has had no superior in the profundity and range of his learning. Fifty years ago, in the well-known dissertation attached to his Commentary on the Philippians, Lightfoot collected practically all the available data upon the question of orders and upon the process by which the local government of churches by presbyter-bishops passed into government by a single bishop and his presbyters. He showed conclusively that there was no threefold order in the Church of the Apostles, that bishop and presbyter were names for one office and that the "episcopate was formed not out of the Apostolic order by localization but out of the presbyteral by elevation." This important conclusion aroused vigorous protests from High Churchmen, but it has not been materially disturbed. The *Syriac Peshito,* the first version into which the New Testament was translated, and the *Didache,* the most venerable of early Christian documents, recovered within the last half century,[2] verified Dr. Lightfoot's argument. The growth and the governance of the historic episcopate can undoubtedly be traced from sub-apostolic times, when authority was exercised by the local churches, until it reached its culmination in the dogma of papal infallibility. During that prolonged period the office passed through frequent and complicated stages of evolution. The rule of the monarchical bishops, the exuberance with which Ignatius expounded their claims and dignities, the Cyprianic doctrine which elevated them to an unprece-

[2] *The Didache* formed part of a manucsript of the eleventh century, discovered in 1873 in the Jerusalem Monastery of the Most Holy Sepulcher in the Greek quarter of Constantinople, by Bryennios (afterward Greek Metropolitan of Nicomedia) and published by him in 1883. The work belongs to the first half of the second century at the latest, since it is identical with the *Teaching of the Apostles* with which Clement of Alexandria (circa 160–215 A. D.) and other early Fathers were familiar.

dented degree, and the expansion of their power from parochial to diocesan and world-wide boundaries are landmarks of an endless debate from which we must refrain. Baptismal Regeneration, the Real Presence in the Holy Communion, and other dogmas, which are said to derive their sacramental value from the validity of Anglican Orders, while still believed and taught by Anglo-Catholics, must eventually be vitally affected by the large variations already felt at the heart of their creed. Its exponents were driven by the invidious nature of their claims to unearth material for the support of foregone conclusions. Their researches occasionally travestied the past and supplied them with no sufficient clue to the labyrinth of Christian thought. They stood, and still stand, upon an imaginary platform, "from which," in the language of Principal Tulloch, "they proceeded to the condemnation of everybody else, or the apotheosis of themselves as the representatives of Christian antiquity."[3] Exclusive sacramental privileges and their places in the Church and her ministry are thus diversely interpreted by those who give them credence. Whether the episcopacy is of the *esse* or only of the *bene esse* of the Church, Gore, Moberly and Swete could be quoted on the one side; Lightfoot, Hort and Gwatkin on the other. Until representative Roman and Anglican Catholics are agreed upon the intrinsic nature of the office, its precise functions, its developments in prelacy, its bearing upon ministerial equality, how can those who now dissent from its supremacy be expected to assent to it? They admit its great service as an organ of unity for correct belief and successful propaganda; they desire the removal of barriers of separatism; they recognize the benefits of wise and godly oversight. But the character of the authority to which they are asked to subject themselves will have to be more explicitly and uniformly defined before it can be employed to unify divided Protestantism.[4]

[3] See the author's *The Three Religious Leaders of Oxford*, pp. 574–576.
[4] See *Essays on the Early History of the Church and the Ministry*,

Bishop Hensley Henson declares that no thoughtful or educated Christian dreams of finding in the New Testament an indisputable title for theories of Divine right, whether of churches, kingdoms, orders, or individuals. These theories have met with the reverses due baseless assumptions to which are attached the highest implications of Sacramentarianism. Contrary to Scripture, to Christian experience, to reason, to the deeper spiritual instincts of man, they nevertheless persist because the all-powerful organization of Rome has embodied them. Had Canterbury, or the Tractarians, or their offspring the Catholic Anglicans, been the only sponsors of the theories, they could not have agitated the Protestant Church nor thwarted the growth of her fraternity. The spectacle of the educated and liberal men of an era and the influential leaders of growing Church factions traveling at the same time in diametrically opposite directions to find the truth requisite for human good, has been, to say the least, bewildering. Unfortunately the consequences of this confusion are visited upon the pulpit, which was and is too often judged by the romantic and mystic speech with which High Anglicans have elaborated their ideas. This particular speech expresses too little that has actually existed; and the claims it sets forth "never really are, but are always in process of becoming." The reiterations of Anglo-Catholics are tokens of their restlessness; they repeatedly assert that their Church is subject to no authority outside itself, and yet they cannot find an authority they are willing to obey within it. Rome scouts their claims to catholicity; of Protestantism they are disenchanted; and in their efforts to establish a mediating authority between Christ and the Church, it would seem as though they cannot escape a provincialism which renders such efforts abortive. Their insensibility to the relative values of evidence, their dislike for the ampler play of the under-

edited by H. B. Swete, which contains the best exposition of the Anglican viewpoint on these questions. For the Free Church position see *Approaches Towards Church Unity,* edited by Newman Smyth and Williston Walker.

standing, their confidence in attenuated catenas which cannot hold the weight they hang upon them, have been freely commented upon. They seldom discuss the history of denominationalism with scientific accuracy, nor, with some exceptions, do they generally manifest an extensive acquaintance with the various phases Christianity has assumed in the extended course of its philosophical speculations.

The Anglicanism of English-speaking peoples must not be confused with that which has been described here. When, for example, the Bishop of London says that nothing could possibly induce the Church of England to part with her belief in her historic orders, he begs the question. That belief, defined in the light of her own articles and precedents, holds that the episcopacy is the most ancient Scriptural and beneficial form of Church polity; but it nowhere teaches that there is a vital, irremovable difference between episcopal and non-episcopal communions as such. This difference is the distinctive mark of Anglo-Catholics, but its chimerical nature should not be permitted to obscure the legitimate beliefs which they hold. They have returned in many particulars not only to the Carolinian divines, to the mediæval rituals, to the ancient Fathers, to the Apostles, but to Christ, and in worship to the ordered reverence and beauty of holiness. They blend conservatism in religious traditions with an intelligent progressiveness in social and political ideals, the latter of which some complacent Low Churchmen and Evangelicals who deprecate their forms of worship might well imitate. Their system lives by the life that is in it, not by the errors it enshrines, and its remarkable advance is to be attributed to the successful warfare it has waged on secularism, to its interpenetration of an insulated communion with the idea of catholicity, and to its revival of the doctrine of the Church as the universal Mother of mankind. Its conspicuous limitations have not prevented its rich religious suggestiveness, fragrant with the peculiar tenderness of sacramental usage, and nurtured by the idea of the sanctification of all visible means through the Incarnate Word.

These are the lasting qualities of a type of Churchmanship that has hallowed and adorned the worship of God.

The insistence that authority in the Church is given in every instance by episcopal commission is flatly contradicted by the Puritan conception of the ministry, which, for it, is not sanctuaried in the priesthoods peculiar to the older orders, but is bestowed by the Church as a whole, and not by historical dispensation. No ancient organization, impressive for its magnitude, duration and gorgeous externalism, determines or approves your ministerial status, which rests upon what you are in yourselves, upon what the self of each of you is by the grace of God, upon what you can accomplish in the harvesting of souls, and upon the indubitable testimony of the Gospel which charters you as ambassadors of Christ. Manifestly, your influence must radiate from inward rather than from outward sources; and the Protestant ministry which cannot meet this requirement will soon become as though it were exercised in a necropolis. It is idle to claim dignities for your calling which are not substantiated by its necessity, its reasonableness and its honorable service. When your preaching recreates men and women in the image of God by communicating the eternal counsels which are wisdom's light and love's directer ray, its credentials are complete, nor will its hearers ask for further proof of your divine mission. These observations emphasize what will presently be said about the Christian manhood of the preacher, and show that every candidate for the ministry should strive to surpass himself and compel even his defects to serve so great a vocation. Assuredly the ordaining acts of episcopacy are conferred on many candidates who have already felt the imposition of the Spirit's mightier hand. But your specific privileges belong to the simplicity which is in Christ, and the waiver of adventitious things is the finger on the dial which registers your genuine authority.

The real strength of your calling consists of the brave acceptance of life as you find it, the determination to reverence

its possibilities, and the belief in its intrinsic holiness. If tempted to lean on externals rather than on essentials, glance at the clerical abnormalities such a habit has often produced. The clergyman who clings to a fictitious precedence, for whom all progress is encased in his particular caste, or the one who turns day into night watching with jealous eye his diminishing importance, or the one who speaks and acts as though he belonged to a race of wilted priests, are specimens whose mentality is easily mapped out. Their profuse sentimentalism drives away normal people, and they are poorly repaid for its indulgence by the lavish adulation of select disciples. Another and exotic group is sensitive to a fault and cannot endure the hurly-burly of masculine intercourse, nor be at home in any place unsheltered by an indoor dilettantism that defeats the serious business of the ministry. These cases of arrested development might be multiplied, and though they are on the wane, they survive in sufficient numbers to admonish you to be inclusive, open, genial and democratic. Do not mistake separateness for sanctity, nor suppose that because you are not as other men, therefore you are their betters. Difference is not necessarily superiority, and, while isolation may quicken talent, fellowship forms character, since it deepens and broadens the channels of life and induces in you the social conceptions which outvie any individual's insulated thought.

There is also a corrective effect in your association with ministers of every creed and church. Intercourse with them reveals the merits of their several organizations and shows that right-minded men agree far more than they differ. Enter their society in the spirit of the Master, and you will receive enlightenment for your own heart. The historical unity of the Roman Catholic, the reverent order of the Anglican, the intellectualism of the Presbyterian, the independence of the Baptist, the culture of the Congregationalist, the fervent fighting force of the Methodist, the quietism of the Friend, the educational methods of the Lutheran, the humanism of

the Unitarian, the ethical ideas of the Hebrew,—all these are as significant for the army of the Living God as are its various corps for our national army, and the Guards Brigade or the Black Watch Regiment for that of Britain.

II

Whatever your ministry becomes by the grace of God, you begin it upon the basis of a simple, essential, transformed manhood. Among your ideals this of your personal character comes first, since it is basic to all the rest, the material out of which the prophet and the preacher are made. St. Paul exhorted Timothy to permit no one to despise his youth but to uphold his self-respect and reputation by making full proof of his ministry.[5] The exhortation was addressed to one who was a man in Christ Jesus, and both the exhortation and such manhood were never more necessary than now. You are not to be merely tolerated, nor treated as dependents, nor looked upon as pawns to be moved about by caprice, as if unsuited to the needs of your generation. Preachers lend themselves to this contumely when they underestimate either their calling or their gifts. False self-depreciation is as much a violation of rectitude as self-conceit, and nothing is more repulsive than that specious vanity which apes humility. According to Shakespeare, self-love is vile, but it is not so vile as the studied abjectness which is nothing more than inverted egotism. Shun as you would a plague the clerical mannerism which has the appearance of downfallen amiability dashed by professional pretentiousness. Do not be deluded by the notion that you should be slavish or apologetic, nor forget that you are first and last the slaves of Christ, and the servants of men for His sake. When all heaven's artillery was arrayed against him, Job exclaimed, "Till I die I will not put away mine integrity from me." His integrity was the tissue of his very being, which nothing could destroy, and his protest registered

[5] I Timothy iv: 12.

one of the fundamental requirements of every ambassador of God.[6] Convinced that where manhood shrivels the ministry is degraded and that what you have to say the world needs to heed, behave as those who are public benefactors, who owe no man anything except the Gospel; whose intercourse is sincere; whose purposes are laudable; whose lives are an open book. Beyond question, whatever else you are, you must be men whom God can choose and set apart for His purposes as He did young David among the sheepfolds of Bethlehem.

The strength of the Protestant ministry depends upon its personal character, and it dedicates the manhood I have indicated to its grandest uses when it makes the pulpit the center of human and divine influence. The prophets of every era were conscious of this dedication, and, while differing in many respects, were a unit in their identification of uprightness of individual life with the nature of their mission. There are to-day specific reasons for that advanced self-realization which transcends ecclesiastical limitations. Men of stalwart and solid character, ordained of God and esteemed by their fellows, intent upon the largest service, unmoved by the glamour of honors and emoluments, eager only for the reward of those who turn many to righteousness, are the chief demand of the situation you confront, and their preponderance will determine the future of the Reformed Churches.

Under ordinary circumstances, a conscientious minister of strong natural parts who mingles with the people without forfeiting his independence or his courtesy will go far in the routine duties of the clerical office. Should he ask, however, "What lack I yet?" the answer is, "Little enough!" unless he aspires to the preaching which is a sure word of prophecy, evoking man's ceaseless question, "How shall I appear before God?" and moving his every impulse toward righteousness. Such preaching possesses not only an adequate expression of intellectualized sentiment, but that sanctified passion which issues from the preacher's personal experience, by virtue of

[6] Cf. Milton's noble vindication of himself in *The Second Defense of the People of England.*

which he is consciously a son of God and a freeman in Christ. If preaching of this kind be your ideal, as I assume it is, you will not be satisfied that you are sober or intense, soothing or provocative. The revelation within you that God for Christ's sake accepts you as you are and in your sin, to save you from its guilt and wretchedness, overcomes fluctuating moods, snaps the gilded chains of mere rhetoric, and smites the consciences of your hearers with the bolts of its conviction. As a primal assurance of Divine grace, it offers the firmest foundation for your ministry of the Word, and the largest openings for its edification. Its fountain of responsive emotion, which never runs dry, arises in the heart, suffuses the will and the reason with its vital certitudes, and preserves the Evangelical message of the Church. The ambassadors of Christ who have had the soul of the martyr, the vision of the seer and the acumen of the Christian thinker have been, without exception, regenerated men. We do not associate them with the chameleon-like character of the orator who takes color from his surroundings and whose principles, if they do not suit the popular taste, can be changed. He comes to excite the spirit; they, to redeem it; his eloquence is ephemeral; theirs is the unveiling of a great sacramental deed; he has a habitual facility for speech which dies away; they utter the sayings which are as a nail fastened in a sure place; he herds with the public mind; they stand above it to upraise its ideals and establish its final aims; he deals with the hackneyed issues which seldom go beyond the temporal; they handle the creative Word of the Lord which is a consuming and a purifying fire. Neither wealth, freedom, institutions, nor doctrinal systems are so urgently needed as regenerated men, and the Christian realm will dwindle unless they appear within it. Do not rely too exclusively upon the ethical ministry which is subordinated in the New Testament to that of grace. The ethical moment has never been the supremely religious moment, not even for the Greek; and although clean hands and a pure heart are absolute requisites, the number of those who seek them through Heaven's mercy

in Christ could well be increased. You may gain intellectual, moral and theological values which aid preaching; nevertheless, it is not these but personal and saving faith that is the mainspring for your message; nor can those values be divorced from that faith without losing half their worth. Insist upon the truth that he who does righteousness is righteous; but also insist upon the deeper truth that the source of righteousness is of God in Christ Jesus. Otherwise your virtues, in themselves commendable, are like guests bidden to a Barmecide feast. Thus you will answer those who oppose Christianity by demonstrating that it is the supreme method of goodness, and that not the ethical but the redeemed being of man is the organ of social and spiritual regeneration. The witness of the Spirit of love and holiness in your spirit, given that you may communicate His afflatus to others, is the divine process which insures blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of your salvation.

There are preachers who, though justly esteemed for their acquirements, have not the one thing needful. They possess intellectual superiority, flexibility of manner and limpidity of statement. They cannot be accused of the over-emphasis, the indiscretion and the tumult that indicate a surcharged rather than a harmonious mind. Yet their choicest periods fall dead at their feet, and they leave audiences admiring them but unmoved by what they say. There is no overflow of inspired speech "in all the keys of passion," no realistic expression of throbbing life in their studied and graceful discourse. It has more of learning than of the might of indefinable wisdom we call Divine, that nourisher of prophets, apostles, poets, which is so often indifferent to human wisdom. Their preaching is bookish and conventional, not experimental nor emotional. They speak from a literary point of view, whereas the speech which is power is intensely vital and mobilizes all gifts for its cause. Hence the creative religious imagination which is the soul of sacred utterance and determines its range of vision has forsaken them. It is not in them to say:

"Oft when the Word is on me to deliver,
Lifts the illusion, and the truth lies bare;
Desert or throng, the city or the river,
Melts in a lucid Paradise of air,—

"Only like souls I see the folk thereunder,
Bound who should conquer, slaves who should be kings,—
Hearing their one hope with an empty wonder,
Sadly contented in a show of things;—

"Then with a rush the intolerable craving
Shivers throughout me like a trumpet call,—
Oh, to save these! to perish for their saving,
Die for their life, be offered for them all!" [7]

What weight of thought and sentiment they lose who do not carry this burden of prophecy, nor bend beneath the overshadowings of the Highest, nor strive, even unto pain, to reincarnate Eternal Truth! The Kingdom suffers the violence Myers idealizes in his *Saint Paul;* it yields to the pressure of an apostolic urgency. Moreover, that urgency adjusts itself to widely varied temperaments and glorifies themes whose treatment must otherwise be ordinary. Faraday's subjects were a tea kettle, a chimney, soot, ashes; yet his enthusiasm for science drew London to his feet. Jane Barlow describes an Irish hovel, its roof of sod and its peat fire, with such a mystical and yet luminous touch that all the tragedy of Ireland breathes from her pages. In superior ways the Spirit of God in the preacher certifies the Divine Presence in humblest surroundings which are sincere and undefiled, rich toward the poor in spirit, restraining the over-sanguine, prompting the timid. What appears to be dust He proves to be granite, and cowardly retreat is turned into heroic advance at His command. The tranquillity of a musing heart is also His abode, where He speaks in the still, small voice which outbids the tempest, the earthquake and the fire. Wherever the Lord thus gives Himself to His spokesmen, their respective dispositions are laid under His constraint, and they become in their several ways the interpreters of Heaven.

[7] F. W. H. Myers: *Saint Paul*, p. 34.

Two universal appeals greet you, the appeal for pardon, and the appeal for goodness, and once these are satisfied by your ministry, the Kingdom is born in men. You must impart an actual vivid knowledge of God's saving grace through sermons that succor the lowly and the meek, uphold the weak who stumble and the faint who fall, rescue those whose virtues are threatened by temptation, and those whose vices are made more desperate by unavailing remorse. The languid rhetorician, gratified by the husks of earthly homage, arrogant and graceless in his temporalities; the master of extemporaneous discourse, knitting it together with a facility that has neither poignancy nor depth, cannot avail for the spiritual emergencies you have to overcome. What others scarcely dare to whisper in their secret prayers you are called upon to publish abroad. The publication will not be deficient in authoritative and winning qualities so long as it is controlled by Him Who sends you forth. That clever satirist of the clergy, Samuel Butler, illustrates the truth that criticism is a commodity which can be bought very cheaply, though its actual value is another matter. He expressed the popular notion in saying that the minister is expected to be "a human Sunday," and that things are not to be done by him which are venial in the "week day classes." The *raison d'être* of his vocation is its consecration to a Christian idealism in word and deed, which elevates him in the general apprehension. Men do not regard the elevation as separative, but as their delegated contribution through him to what they deem religious. "This," remarks Butler, "is why a clergyman is so often called a vicar,—he being the person whose vicarious goodness is to stand for that of those entrusted to his charge." The author of *The Way of All Flesh* misread your commission, which has to be ratified in far nobler ways than he indicated. But in misreading it, he revealed the widespread sentiment concerning its honor and responsibility. However read, the visible approval of God must rest upon it; and whether ministers are legalists, sacramentarians or evangelicals, repentance toward Him and faith in Christ are to be ever personal for them, and

the first article of their propaganda. The reality of these truths has but to subside into a reproachful memory of departed confidence and peace for their attempted impartation to become a mockery. Preaching is, therefore, not to be judged by the stir it makes, but by its real end, and this is solely determined by its faithful proclamation of the Divine grace which purifies human lives.

Christian conversion should not be confused with those changes at the behest of conviction which have frequently occurred in distinguished individuals, since it is preëminently a regenerating process, which, while often sharing the intellectual importance of such instances, exceeds them in the character it produces and the service it renders. The historic types of justifying faith, and the work they did for the Church and the world, are doubtless well known to you. Their hold on eternal verities was due to the discovery that integral religious beliefs, the acceptance of which hinges solely upon external testimony, operate under defective conditions. Faith thus related is vulnerable and, even when sincere, it is not to be compared for preaching values with the faith inspired by your personal union with Christ. Experiment as you may, this is the position from which you must not be dislodged. While it is held, your message is neither minimized to a mere scheme of probabilities, nor reduced to those whims of subjectivity which are as moonlight unto sunlight when compared with the assurance of the regenerated believer. Persevere during youth's prime in this state of being, where the things that waste the preacher's substance are banished, and the truth which outvies intellectualism is your heritage, at once the objective of your devotion and of your reasoned discourse. Carry to the close of your ministry, untarnished and unimpaired, the sense of your access to immediate plenary grace, in order that you may proclaim it to every seeker after God. A distinction far too sharp to be beneficial has been drawn between a ministry that is educational and one that is evangelistic. Its severity is traceable to those objections which from the first have been lodged against the doctrine of Chris-

tian assurance, the recipients of which, from St. Paul to Luther, from Luther to Wesley, from Wesley to Newman, were wont to regard themselves and the Creator as the only valid ends, for which all else was the means. Lesser men have made even larger assertions of their rights as freemen in grace and have not always realized their corresponding responsibilities. A species of evangelism which just now monopolizes too much of the time and energy of Protestantism has identified this great truth of Christian assurance with nearly every form of religious bigotry and wilful ignorance. No dogma ever emanated from mediævalism itself that was more contradictory of the spirit of Christianity than some characteristic utterances of men who speak of regeneration as if they held the patent for its transmission. Yet when these detractions have been considered, they are slight indeed compared with the illumination which regenerating grace has diffused in countless multitudes. It is no talisman, no magic spell, no shibboleth, but the historic working of the love of God in Christ Jesus throughout the Christian ages. It knows the human soul and pledges it no instantaneous perfection; but, when rightly appropriated and applied to meet the mind of each moving age, it is Christianity at its best; a vigilant and winsome wisdom which rebukes materialized conceptions and intellectual self-sufficiency, warring on spurious forms of spirituality and on the pride which refuses to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.[8] As such, preach it, for it makes your mission an inherent part of yourself and gives it the reversion of the future. The minister of God who is not definitely prepared to do the work of an evangelist and to embody therein his experiences as a regenerated man is grievously handicapped. Economize those experiences for pulpit purposes, steadily directing them to the various phases of your environment.

Suppress any tendency to ignore or to dismiss with sweeping generalities numberless fellow Christians who do not share your opinions on this matter. The secret operations of the

[8] II Corinthians x: 5.

Divine Presence in human spirits do not submit themselves to the rough and ready assignments of those who are righteous overmuch. Avoid also the reading of the majority of diaries which have long been part of the religious paraphernalia of evangelicalism. They are seldom robust in tone, and often cater to an unwholesome concern about the minutiæ of strained moods, or to a morbid analysis of faults that were better left undissected. In them the soul, sick through excessive scrupulousness, estimates its progress by the shadows rather than by the sunshine. It is not from these trivialities but from his whole life in Christ that the preacher's inspiration flashes out, and when you forget them you are more likely to dwell in that hidden depth of Love Divine which is the strength of the pulpit. Pledged to regeneration as the main factor of prophetic existence, do not hesitate to enter within the mystic cloud nor to reveal in your preaching the fruits of your obedience to the heavenly vision. I strongly deprecate the naked parade of all we have ever been and done, and would not advise you to imitate those brethren who strip their souls bare before the public and recite the strange tales of their past for the press. But, on the other hand, many clergymen lose the main source of their strength because of an unfaith disguised as spiritual reticence.

Christian experience communicates through abasement as well as elevation; it casts us down to lift us up; it has its penances and its pæans; its sounds are both stormy and soothing in our ears. Yet so that it grants us souls for our hire, it should mould as it will our passive clay. By its means genius has exceeded itself in preaching, and less famous endeavors have been made bright and beautiful. You have not to be a Boanerges nor give out sermons that decree the faith and practice of continents in order to prove your acceptance by your Master. Watchful instruction, gentle counsel, loving persistence, the silent entreaty of a life of luminous devotion, are the specific gifts of preachers who live dangerously for sin and sufficiently for redemption. Partake freely of the grace God provides, for most of the mischief wrought by profes-

sional teachers of religion is due to their neglect of the life-giving stream. If earnestness is quenched, if self protrudes, if prayer is a burden, if before the assembly of your people you feel no melting of the heart, forget yourself, stoop down, and drink, and live again. When your own soul grows lean, half measures will not check a condition which can become depraved. You may never commit those offenses which incur the indignation that hurls men into ignominy; but to protect yourself and your calling from spiritual dearth, return at every stage in your career to the God of your life and office, inquire of Him what He would have you be, and, at least, attempt to be that before you again lift up your voice in the congregation. Until there is a more adorable being than the Eternal Father, a better service than that of His Son, a mightier power than virtuous love, a grander vocation than the redemption of mankind, regeneration in Christ will be for you the way to the Father, the power of love in sacrifice, the life of God in your mission and message. Personality, free will, the moral sense, the affections, attain their highest quality from the Indwelling Christ, and those who are partakers of the Divine Nature can identify its sublimities,

> ". . . with murmurs of the air,
> And motions of the forest and sea,
> And voices of living beings, and woven hymns
> Of night and day, and the deep heart of man."

The preacher who abides in the fellowship of his Lord will verify his teachings and ministrations by the experiences of that fellowship. To make the sense of His presence the habitual practice of your lives is to do a service for yourself and for your fellow men, which neither cogency nor amplitude of mind can render of themselves. Bunyan fully understood the meaning of the communion that consecrates the ambassador of Christ, and phrased it in his inimitable style when Hopeful was spurned by Atheist, who asserted that there was no celestial city; whereupon Christian made reply: "Did we not see it from the top of Mount Clear, when we were with the shep-

herds?'' Upon that appeal no denial could be fastened, nor can there be now, so long as the Indwelling Christ is the personal source of your ministry. See to it that you translate the secret of His presence into a creed of reason and of faith, and into the blameless living that effects renewals in society, which unaided speech cannot accomplish.

Whatever may be the philosophical or theological culture on which your thinking feeds, and whether you are in temper critical or conservative, you will not lose the sense of religious reality so long as there is a vital unity between your regenerative experience and your theology. Such a unity best assimilates the intellectual and spiritual elements of preaching. The Bishops of Ely, Oxford and Ripon, the Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford University, the Master of the Temple and other authorities of Anglicanism have recently presented a report to their Church which deals judiciously with this subject. The argument underlying what they say shows that Christian experience is the raw material of true doctrine. They contrast ''Theology, the knowing of God,'' with ''Religion, the keeping of rules,'' as the nobler and indeed the fundamental science. Paradoxical as it appears, the contrast is profoundly suggestive and deserves your painstaking attention. For if modernity has taught preachers any lesson, it is that practice divorced from knowledge deteriorates. Rule-of-thumb sermons are as undesirable as any other products thus obtained. Every religious revolution that has transformed nations had its motive power in the assimilation of great theological ideas, which were no more fortuitous than the strategy that underlay the first battle of the Marne. On the contrary, they were familiar truths of the New Testament Gospel, reiterated because of a renewed experience of their significance; and as such, the doctrinal bases from which Christianity was projected into its historic expansions. Where it has retreated and decayed, as in later monasticism, the disaster began when the religious no longer sought Divine learning, but forsook their fellows and fled to the solitude of their cells to find their reward in the raptures of immured pietism.

They evaded the precepts for lack of which the people perished; and hid their light within the precincts of stately shrines, where they remained obdurate and non-social until doom fell upon them. We are always within earshot of the multitudes Jesus loved, and the key of Divine knowledge has not been taken from us. Yet can we claim that those who hear us are really versed in Christian truth? Many will answer that they are indifferent to utterances which are designated as doctrinal, as though this were their fatality. I have not found them so; but if they are, the responsible teachers of the Church should overcome the indifference and make Christian theology a living issue. It must be so regarded, appropriated, presented, as to blend the intellectual and spiritual interests of preaching, and raise it to a fresh effectiveness. Glance at the advertisements of pulpit themes in the secular press, which are sometimes a veritable chamber of horrors, and you at once detect how far a decadent pulpit has wandered from its holy obligations, and become a soothsaying. Admitting the wider scope of the ministry, it yet remains true that every value of its circumferences depends on its center in a vital theology. Clergymen who in their perverse ignorance of theology, or their devotion to secondary things, turn aside from their main duty as the advocates of Christian ideals, are prone to be busy or bureaucratic or talkative men, but not men apt to learn, to teach, to persuade, to convince others of the need of right relations with God. Their homilies are impotent for want of spiritual gravamen; they are out of touch with the tenets of historic Christianity, subjected to the shiftings and catchwords of the hour, and are neither enlightening nor inspiring, as every such discourse should assuredly be. Bolingbroke asks in *Richard the Second:*

> "Who can hold fire in his hand
> By thinking on the frosty Caucasus?"

Who, likewise, can draw near the spot where two worlds meet in awful contact, if he is insensible to the communications of

the greater world?—preoccupied with superficial effects rather than with their underlying causes; intent upon excitation rather than upon an apocalypse. When preaching is meager, it is because the preacher is impoverished in himself. When it consists of amateurish essays in literature or sociology, this is because he has no stores of religious reflection to offer and must needs follow the lines of least resistance. But when it is an interpretation of the infinitudes of saving truths, which makes these clearer to the dullest heart, it is because the preacher has tarried with the God-given sources of his faith. The adaptation of your discourse to this higher atmosphere cannot be made at a bound; it is a process of habitual meditation upon supreme issues, which engrosses every faculty of the preaching mind. I defy any clergyman who thus consecrates himself to use the most modest gift of utterance without beneficial effects. Lassitude will vanish from audiences when he appears, because as a guide to the Invisible he knows the territory he treads, its boundaries, its resources, its horizons which verge on eternity. Imbibe, then, the salient characteristics of the theology at which I have hinted; reason from its experimental realities; and remember that whatever in the sermon hits the mark must first be in the preacher.

The idea that the art of living religiously is a sudden incentive, which needs no education, is contradicted by the fact that the deepest spiritual life of congregations is nourished by laying line upon line and precept upon precept. In order that this may be done, you must be teachers of doctrine, not in any ordinary sense, but after the manner prescribed by St. Paul's prayer in the letter to the Philippians, instructors whose "love abounds yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment."[9] Moreover, your theology, be it little or much, should be homogeneous and consistent; not an incongruous assortment of ideas, but a systematic scheme of thought, close of texture, however ample in range. In behalf of those who hear you, speak of what you know, not in the language of the professional theologian, nor with the air of the philosopher,

[9] Philippians i: 9.

nor in coarse terms which belittle your subject, but with naturalness and reverence. Do not be afraid of dogmatic statements, once induction has compassed them about; for there is no more superficial notion than the assertion that dogma is necessarily hard, narrow, unreal, and fatal to spirituality. Dean Church, in commenting on this prejudice, protests against the idea that dogmas are "without any affinities to poetry or the truths of things, or to the deeper and more sacred and powerful of human thoughts. If dogmas are not true, that is another matter; but it is the fashion to imply that dogmas are worthless, mere things of the past, without sense or substance or interest, because they are dogmas. As if Dante were not dogmatic in form and essence; as if the grandest and worthiest religious prose in the English language was not that of Hooker, nourished amid the subtleties, but also amid the vast horizons and solemn heights, of scholastic divinity. A dogmatic system is hard in hard hands, and shallow in shallow minds, and barren in dull ones; and unreal and empty to preoccupied and unsympathizing ones; we dwarf and distort ideas that we do not like, and when we have put them in our own shapes and in our own connection, we call them unmeaning or impossible. Dogmas are but expedients, common to all great departments of human thought, and felt in all to be necessary, for representing what are believed as truths, for exhibiting their order and consequences, for expressing the meaning of terms and the relations of thought. If they are wrong, they are, like everything else in the world, open to be proved wrong; if they are inadequate, they are open to correction; but it is idle to sneer at them for being what they must be, if religious facts and truths are to be followed out by the thoughts and expressed by the language of man."[10]

The higher problems of preaching involved in this account of dogma have to be solved by ministers who are thoroughly acquainted with the teachings of Holy Scripture and with the facts and laws of mental and moral being. It may be said in

[10] *Occasional Papers;* Vol. II, p. 458.

parenthesis that while you cultivate that acquaintance, you should sweep the cupboard bare of what provender you have to give your people, and replenish it after each disbursement with further supplies. The pulpit's wealth is not in any deposit of hoarded truths, but in its immediate circulation of thought based upon things, new and old, out of its treasury; and the minister's influence consists in the constant community of ideas between him and his hearers. The future of preaching will be gravely imperiled if theological questions are left to be fought out between reckless changes and rancorous opposition to all change. You must be ready to mediate, to reconcile, to watch for the larger transitions that come silently and apace, and are comparable with the mysterious transmutation that overtook the primitive Church when the Brotherhood became a world-Ecclesia, and was literally made over into forms better adapted to the persistent aims of its life. Organization, polity, doctrine, teaching were taken in detail from the material at hand, while the continuity of testimony was maintained. Likewise, the recent developments of religion into new combinations of thought and procedure, which have already been discussed, sprang up with tropical suddenness and vigor. Instead of taking what apparently was their prearranged course, they branched off in different or entirely opposite directions; and some godly men are grievously dismayed by this scattering of forces. Yet the points of bifurcation are decisive ones, where the alert and scholarly intervention of a trained ministry should be felt. You must absorb the benefits of such change without its wastes and eccentricities, and to that end know the historic creeds, not as perfect expressions of the beliefs of the Church, but as "milestones marking her still unfinished progress." The despised theological sermon can be made a vital utterance with propositions setting forth the truth of the Gospel in its daylight, not in the mists of unintelligent emotion.

The Faith we inherit stands forever in the strength of Heaven, and we need have no fear that it will falter. Nevertheless, we have to advocate it wisely if we would attract and

win our generation. The worst blows inflicted upon its intellectual stability have been dealt from within by cheap empirics, who deny that right beliefs are the surest foundations of life. The past and present of Christianity refute this opinion. Live in them both, and cause both to live in others. If the past has at intervals been tyrannical, a more thorough knowledge of it is the surest emancipation from its predominance now; if the present crowds you, relate it with the past to repel its undue intrusion. The preacher, who adjusts all his inward experiences and acquirements to the lordship of Christ, will best sustain the ambassadorship of a universal Gospel for mankind, and handle with increasing skill and for purposed results the spiritual questions that transcend men's utmost thought.

III

It has been suggested that preaching should be largely confined to specially trained men who would undertake the duties of the pulpit, leaving those of the pastorate to the rest of the clergy, who, in turn, would be relieved of what is frequently an excessive burden. This is done to an extent in the Roman Catholic Church, where the Jesuit Fathers enjoy a deserved reputation as sacred orators, and are frequently called upon to conduct parochial missions or to preach on special occasions. Some well-known ministers of Protestantism also itinerate in a similar manner, and their presence and message are of benefit to many churches and to English-speaking lands. But such a practice, although having its merits, could not become general without injuring the efficiency of the pulpit. No man can preach to your flock as you can, who share its joys and sorrows, successes and failures, hopes and anxieties. Between you and your parishioners is the unbreakable bond of a mutual sympathy and affection; you understand them as does no outsider, and their knowledge of you gives freedom and accessibility to what you have to say. There are always missing links to be supplied in every parish, ragged homes to mend, dens of wickedness to cleanse, sinful miseries to counteract,

painful wounds to staunch, and broken hearts to heal. What if you should have to curtail bookish pursuits for these more imperative undertakings? No philosophical disquisition can compare with them for illuminating effects; and the minister who is willing to be reckoned foolish for their sake will not lose by the hazard. The tenderness and wisdom with which he approaches human needs are imparted to him by his affectionate interest in his fellow men. They readily pardon occasional breaks in his argument if they know that he personifies pure and undefiled religion. The intuitions and intimations which cannot be acquired by rule or rote are produced or at least developed by the pressure of your pastoral duties. A fresh vision of God awaits you in every sick chamber which faces toward the eternities, and the steadfast confidence which many of your parishioners display in the hour of death confirms your own faith. Here practice verifies doctrine; the truths you preach are re-animated, and your commission to proclaim them is renewed. Forge the articles of your creed in the furnace of affliction; fashion them beneath the hammer of surrounding exigencies. A habitually vivid sense of the Invisible is your chief spiritual faculty; and if it needs retirement for its clarity, it also needs the invigorating air of daily life for its stimulus. Preaching is an expression not of the pedant or the pedagogue and never of the mere official, but of the whole man as well as of his beliefs. It spares no part of us, and, even at that, the openings for its message are all too narrow. The larger your faculties, the wider your sympathy, the deeper your insight, the more numerous will be the responsive chords you evoke from your fellowmen. Would that this were more strongly felt by us all! I have often been made aware of the hindrance to my pastoral and pulpit work caused by my ignorance of surrounding souls and their actual circumstances. One looks daily upon a thousand homes in which men, women and children are endeavoring to live decently and courageously. What cheerful sacrifices they make, what toils they readily sustain, what fortitude they display! They, too, are trees of life planted by the rivers of God and bearing all man-

ner of fruits. The inspiration they convey would sweep one's sermons into ampler spheres did one but possess it. We cannot always be at their right hand, but those who have granted me that grace have enabled me to realize that I was no longer alone, that I had allies among the rich and the poor; and that what I had to say to them must never be insensible to the inscrutable mystery in which human lives are rooted.

The antagonistic elements of a parish are not without their advantages for the preacher. The patient tact which opponents exact from you is a part of your ministerial education. Many a clergyman has been enervated by the relaxing air of a sycophantic environment. He becomes a precious oracle rather than a human being, irascible when challenged, and inclined toward pomposity instead of amenability. Cross-grained or eccentric individuals are not cheerful company, but they can be used to further your facility for fellowship. The reputed good things of clerical life are often its masked foes; and though they fall to some ministers like the ripe apple from the tree, the aftertaste of that famous fruit has not always been sweet. Edmund Burke rejoiced that at every step of his career he was forced to stop and show his passports. His contemporary Horace Walpole had no such delay but drove along an open road in a handsome coach-and-four, his outriders blowing a merry blast while the obsequious crowds applauded and doffed their hats to the elegant man of fashion and of letters. Yet we now perceive that it was not to his great genius alone that Burke's elevation over Walpole should be ascribed, but also to the compulsion of an adverse fate. The vigor and influence of your ministry are frequently evoked by a similar stress, and await you in the most unlikely places and the most unamiable persons. In the attempt to evade discomfort and hardship many a clergyman's honor and usefulness have been walled in. Hence I advise you to anticipate censorious critics and disputatious hearers, that you may change their outlook at whatever cost to personal ease, so long as a moral breach is not involved. Your conciliatory attitude toward divergent spirits and your willingness to hear

with equanimity the burden of their separated minds, test your manhood, and constitute one of the rarest tributes you can offer to your calling. It is a cowardly prejudice that beats a hasty retreat from uncongenial homes to nestle in those where your undoubted gifts and graces are gratefully admired and the sorry fact lamented that you are not better appreciated by daring fault-finders. Browning states the philosophy of opposition when he tells us to

> ". . . welcome each rebuff
> That turns earth's smoothness rough,
> Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!
> Be our joy three-parts pain!
> Strive, and hold cheap the strain;
> Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe!"

After all, your aim is victory, not immunity, and a good soldier of Jesus Christ will find it more conducive to success to encounter the contradictions of sinners rather than the fulsome flattery of foolish admirers. When such bespatter his feeblest efforts with false praise and refrain from taxing him with palpable errors, let him seek a more bracing atmosphere. It is on the tented field, amid your comrades in the common strife, that you rid your arms of rust, shake off dull sloth and devouring pride, and find the loyal surroundings, the manly homage to manhood, the staunch support and friendly differences, which are alike honorable to those who render and to him who receives them.

In conclusion, move with fearlessness, frankness and urbanity among every rank and condition, and tell of your greatest spiritual dreams and exaltations in a human tone. Be fervid without being the victim of fervor. Condense your ideals to an efficient method by strokes of good sense, and retain in your personal relationships the wisdom and charity which mark the priest and prophet of souls. Of all kinds of service yours, when rightly undertaken, is the most intimate, universal, free from artifice, honest and straightforward in its

appeal. Gather with those to whom it is proffered on terms of equality, asking for no benefit of clergy. You may not realize every hope, and it is useless to expect that your course will always be acclaimed. Progress, even when legitimate, is won only by battling, and for each forward step mankind has taken toll of sacrificial spirits consecrated to its highest good. In the conflict with evil it is unreasonable to expect an immediate and decisive victory which realizes all your hopes. But to you it is given to cast the seed of a happier future in the furrows of a needy present; to remove the obstacles created by worldly indifference and mere religiosity. Be watchful, patient, serene; with your modest lamp always lit and trimmed, shining in dark places and cheering and guiding tired wayfarers on their journey. Suffer no gusts of unregulated passion to extinguish its light, no careless or indolent habits to rob it of its oil. The sober earnest temper, withal cheerful and sanguine, of a true bondservant of Christ will the more speedily bring the incredulous masses into the Kingdom. The devoted minister sets truth above purchase, and the sanctity of inner life above all outward things. However wide his moral knowledge or brilliant his intellectual attainments, he does not eschew those virtues of the common mind and conscience which make human fellowship a divine reality. Thus does he become a man whom God can use for the loftiest purposes, upon whom others can lean in their distress, finding in him the elevating friendship due to an enduring faith and a virtuous example. He then is the chosen, the blessed ambassador of God who is determined

> "To have to do with nothing but the true,
> The good, the eternal—and these, not alone
> In the main current of the general life,
> But small experience of every day
> Concerns of the particular hearth and home:
> To learn not only by a comet's rush
> But a rose's birth—not by the grandeur, God,
> But by the comfort, Christ."

CHAPTER VII

PREACHING: ITS PREPARATION AND PRACTICE

Now it came to pass, while the multitude pressed upon him and heard the word of God, that he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret; and he saw two boats standing by the lake: but the fishermen had gone out of them, and were washing their nets. And he entered one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the multitudes out of the boat. And when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Put out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answered and said, Master, we toiled all night, and took nothing: but at thy word I will let down the nets. And when they had done this, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes; and their nets were breaking; and they beckoned unto their partners in the other boat, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. But Simon Peter, when he saw it, fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was amazed, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken; and so were also James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. And when they had brought their boats to land, they left all, and followed him.

St. Luke v: 1–11.

CHAPTER VII

PREACHING: ITS PREPARATION AND PRACTICE

The essentials of preaching—Inspiration of the Holy Spirit—Concentration of gifts and acquirements—Spiritual ends of preaching—Mysticism—Knowledge of the Scriptures—Mastery of other books—Definition of sermon—Choice of texts—Development of subject—Orderly arrangement of material—Methods of sermonizing—Pulpit themes.

Lucretius speaks in a striking figure of the elevation of mind necessary for those who would adequately survey the conflicts encircling them. He paints the array of opposing armies in the field, the gleam of their burnished armor, the charging squadrons that seem to shake the solid earth. But on the far-off hills is a tranquil eminence from which the hurrying legions appear as if they stood still, and the flash and fury of battle blend, as it were, in one sheet of steady flame. One who would draw apart from the chaotic struggle of life in order to make its meaning more clear, by showing how its various relations stand toward one another, may well covet some such elevation as Lucretius portrayed. The detachment it affords is also an absolute essential for a correct observation of the ceaseless warfare of the Church against sin, and for our examination of the equipment requisite for its successful prosecution. Those who essay these tasks should pattern after Milton and first offer devout prayer to the Eternal Spirit, Who can enrich all utterance and knowledge, and Who sends out His seraphim with the hallowed fire of His altar to touch and purify the lips of whom He pleases. It is the inspiration of the Indwelling Paraclete promised by Christ to the infant *Ecclesia* as His Successor, that makes its recipients free of all worlds and upraises them to those heights of thought and

vision which dominate the lower levels of human life. His Person and work in the Church and in the world are too little known or appreciated to-day. Yet let but the unction from the Holy One anoint any ambassador of Heaven, and his word is at once transfused with divine energy and illuminated with divine wisdom. The vivid consciousness of unseen things, the spiritual electricity that thrills the heart of the audience, the solemn stillness in which the Eternal voice is heard by the waiting throng, the calm assurance that gives your office an indisputable power, are manifestations of the presence of the Spirit, proclamations of His sovereignty in the preacher and his message. "In Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth," His ever expanding ministry decrees the truths by which preaching has continued to this day. You do not have to wait for His enduement until you have ransacked the last recesses of theology and metaphysics. There is for every preacher an Advent, if he will but accept it, which is the beginning of the divine life within his life, and a Pentecost, when the love of God is shed abroad in his heart by the Spirit. Thus the supreme hour comes for Him Who is the final expression of the divine mercy, and your morning dawns for a service which He makes more blessed as the years pass. There cannot be any sufficient preparation for the pulpit that does not find its Alpha and Omega in the Spirit. His indwelling is your pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night.

The doctrine of the Spirit is ensphered in the mystery of personality, both human and divine, and it is scarcely necessary to say that no such doctrine can possibly be ultimate, since were it commensurate with the truth involved, it would be far too comprehensive for our faculties. The operations of the hidden God of the heart are viewless as the winds, yet, like them, animating and refreshing, and as essential to the life of the soul as those are to that of the body. The name of Deity, which includes for Christians the personal reality of the Spirit, is the most symbolic of all names, carrying with it profundities that "no house of words builded by man can contain," and

Joubert's comment that it is not hard to believe in God provided one does not attempt to define Him is entirely apposite in this connection. Nevertheless, it is one of the distinctive traits of New Testament teaching that it does, in part, define God, and never more explicitly than in the words of Christ concerning the Spirit as the Universal Witness Who speaks, not of Himself, but of the Father and the Son,—the Indwelling, Self-communicating God Who leads you into all truth and holiness.

While the Christian ideal and its graces and virtues are the fruits of the Spirit, His influence can also be traced in the Pagan ethics which made man the center of existence. There is a pregnant sense in which their contributions to the higher being of the race were prompted and harmonized by Him. When you leave the worn and trampled areas of dogmatic conflict, prolific of misunderstanding and controversy, and occupy the points of vantage indicated by that prince of Hellenic Christian fathers, Justin Martyr, you perceive, as he did, that "stoic, poet, philosopher spoke well in proportion to the share they had received of the Spermatic Word." The tides of the Spirit ebbed and flowed in Socrates, Plato, Aristides, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius and the Catos. They inculcated admirable theories, rarely translated into practice and good intentions that fell far short of action. But their best answers to the endless questionings of human consciousness were not such stuff as dreams are made of, and in those answers the "Nearer Immanence" is indicated, which solves many spiritual problems. You should not be coerced by one-eyed retrospects of racial religious evolution, which are unmindful of the broader economies of the Spirit's administration of truth. His prevenient grace was repeatedly manifested in the strong undertow of Idealism which restrained the menacing floods of pagan lust and godlessness, and diverted the deeper stream of humanity from plunging into a Dead Sea of ruin and blank despair.

But the largest good of the work of the Spirit in moral and religious experience belongs to the planting and training of

the Christian Church, and its generous activities among the peoples of the earth. His ministry in the earliest followers of Jesus, and in the periodical revivals which subsequently swept over the Church, is the most palpable indication of His presence in her children. Treatises upon the Third Person of the Trinity are seldom more than speculative, but that He has energized every Christian epoch cannot be denied without doing violence to historic facts. Von Dobschütz describes the Apostolic period as one of full communion with the Spirit, Who aroused in the Galilean fishermen "an incredible enthusiasm," which quickened and exalted its participants. Pale, tremulous hearts which had so recently quaked with fear now glowed with a courage that bravely confronted vindictive rulers and an embruted populace. Ready utterance, resolute bearing, sacrificial devotion, the abandon of the saint and the fortitude of the martyr, attested the supremacy of the Spirit in the first heralds of the Crucified Redeemer. They wrought wonders, removed mountainous obstacles, transformed oppressed helots into a cloud of witnessing heroes, and showed to the languid gaze of an expiring civilization the rainbow of promise that encircled the Cross. The renewal of Christian preaching during its great period in the fourth and fifth centuries; the purification of European life and morals by the earlier monks and friars of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; the religious revolution of the sixteenth century and the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century were further demonstrations of the Spirit's presence in the Church. Her doctors, thinkers and rulers have also enunciated at His bidding first one and then another of the great verities which she holds in perpetuity for the world. Each theological era produced after its kind; all subserved one inclusive, immutable purpose. The Greek Fathers centered their meditations upon the Person of our Lord; the Latin Fathers magnified the righteousness of the divine government; the mediæval Popes sought to consolidate the Empire of Christ in a world-wide organization; the Schoolmen endeavored to annex secular to sacred knowledge and to enclose both kinds in the Aristotelian formu-

las; the Reformers returned in the liberty of the sons of God to the Pauline conception of Justification by Faith. Viewed separately by those who pander to dissonance and indulge preferences for the part as against the whole, these phases of religious and ecclesiastical change and growth excite the antagonisms which disfigure the history of the Faith. Yet much of that history is exhausted by movements which the Spirit originated and controlled in behalf of divine purposes. Modernism, using the term in its generic sense, has many grave misdirections, but it, too, is subordinated to the sway of the Indwelling Spirit Who presides over the extensions of the Kingdom, determines the complex but steady evolution of society, and evokes from manifold sources those Christian interpretations of life that have ennobled the thinking of successive generations.

From the sub-Apostolic age, when the ripest culture then available was made subsidiary to the New Testament Evangel, to present day theology, poetry and philosophy, the maintenance of man's fellowship with his Maker, of his actual occupation by what has been called "the Within from Beyond," have been the vestibule to the Holy of Holies in which He forever dwells who convinces the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come. Not alone in thought, as with Spinoza and Hegel; nor in feeling, as with Schleiermacher; nor in will, as with Kant, but in the individual and the race alike, and in their several gifts and capacities, does the Spirit operate, fusing them with a divine synthesis, the manifestations of which are love, justice, compassion, and most of all, the grace of God that regenerates and purifies believers. How vitally important then is your personal coöperation with the Spirit Who is the larger self of the prophets of God? The consciousness of His indwelling and the eager desire to realize its fulness stimulate and discipline the preaching mind, determine its religious development and the range and quality of its prophetic instinct. But though His winds blow where they list, the undedicated heart is not apt to feel them. Stretch every sail to their favoring gales; foster the ambition

to be men of that pentecostal ordination which is the gift of the Spirit.

Unfortunately the number of volumes which expound Scriptural teaching upon this subject is all too scanty, but the few we possess are, in the main, of excellent quality. After the work of Basil the Great, *De Spiritu Sancto,* there is a long interval of comparative silence which two still readable Puritan divines, John Owen and John Goodwin, were almost the first to break. They were the forerunners of well known and competent authors like Julius Charles Hare, William Arthur, Doctors Swete, Walker, Orr, Illingworth and Kuyper, Baron Von Hugel and Principal W. T. Davison. *The Tongue of Fire,* by William Arthur, is a classic of Evangelical literature which has been an inspiration to thousands of ministers of all denominations. It searches and humbles the heart of the preacher in order that it may deepen his knowledge of the Spirit's transforming power. The dissertations of some other writers who have been named are pervaded by a fine intellectualism, but they are neither so erudite in treatment nor remote in temper as to surrender to mere abstractions the hunger of the soul for closer intercourse with its Maker. Principal Davison's volume, *The Indwelling Spirit,* evinces a philosophical and ethical scholarship of the highest order combined with ardent devotional feeling and exegetical fidelity, which enable him to restate the doctrine of the Comforter and His Mission in a manner worthy of your serious attention, as is also the volume of Essays, *The Spirit,* edited by B. H. Streeter.

The second essential of the preacher's preparation is a predetermination to make every path he pursues lead directly to the pulpit. Beecher came to Brooklyn, a young divine as yet unknown to fame, somewhat suspect because of his advanced views, but resolved, in his own words, "that every chime in his belfry should ring for Christ," and soon the resonant pealings of his glorious eloquence were heard around the globe. Men much less gifted than Beecher, who nevertheless were intent upon the same end, and averse to passing impressions

and useless emotions, have accomplished more than they ever dared to hope. Ferdinand Foch, Marshal of France, tells us that he wasted no strength in speculating at the expense of the needs of the hour, but rehearsed his military strategies for over forty years and then thrust them when the hour struck into one famous and triumphant effort. If the soldier thus schools himself until the opportune moment comes; if the thinker laboriously conceives his metaphysics and spares no pains for its elaboration; if the artist feels obligated to select the choicest means of expression; surely the Christian preacher, who is supposed to exemplify the religion of sacrifice, cannot hope to be tolerated if he deliberately shirks the demands of his calling. His response to them must be immediate, unconditional, a submission which ripens into an unwavering dedication. Let him once sink into carelessness or evasion and he is automatically excluded from the best possibilities of preaching. Mistaken pulpiteers, who could not distrust learning so distressingly did they but know it better, and self-sufficient brain-worshipers who enter the sanctuary sublimely unconscious of its spiritual mysteries, are alike inimical to your vocation. These types have accentuated the twofold reproach that the Church lags in the intellectual march of mankind or attempts to run a schism through the universe of God. Yet there always have been ambassadors of His, prophets indeed and of a truth, imbued with the sanctities both of faith and knowledge, who heralded the imperishable values of the spiritual life and vindicated the Church as the religious organ of the world. Pattern after them by enlisting every available resource in your preaching; enrich, as they did, what you have to offer to the countless interpretations of the Gospel, with all the powers of your recreated manhood in Christ. By so doing you answer the imperious challenge to prepare in the wilderness a highway for our God, to make straight His path in the desert.

The fully equipped preacher, who influences for good the virile people and movements of his time, is something more than a purveyor of consolations or a dispenser of promised

benedictions. It is enough for ordinary men to fulfil these praiseworthy offices, but the minister cannot be an ordinary man and survive ministerially. He should become a constructive statesman of God's commonwealth; the avowed leader of his community and, in signal instances, of the nation, in every beneficent enterprise. No servant of righteousness can separate himself in these days of peril from the insistent cultivation which makes him, in the language of South, "a palace to entertain Christ and a castle to defend Him"; a minister of the prime sort who requires no apology, ever foremost in the fight against injustice and wrong. Undoubtedly, there are pitfalls to be avoided in this process, superfluous extremes of pietism which relax your hold on actual life, or sophisticated niceties which bespeak the pedant rather than the scholar. These will have to be repressed if the clamant impulses of the preaching heart are to have free play. Yet those impulses need boundaries, and unless Scripture and reason regulate them they usually lapse into sentimentalism.

I am aware that some lecturers on homiletics have occasionally pitched the theme too high, treating their subject as if every student were destined to shine as a pulpit star of the first magnitude,—a result as impossible as it is undesirable, since in the transmission of divine truth allowances have to be made for the varieties of human nature. But the preacher of one talent can always reap the result of his ardent toil, and find in what he garners abundant material for the exercise of thought and imagination. The annals of the pulpit show that not a few men who were deficient in learning evinced a superiority in sermonic utterance, which many of their cultured brethren surveyed at a baffling distance. The Author of your message is no respecter of persons, nor does He disdain to inspire humble but devoted individuals whom the severely academic are prone to regard unfavorably. The ministers who, like Wesley's itinerants, move with the main streams of human life, whose diversified sympathies and familiarity with the fundamentals of the Gospel atone to a considerable degree for their lack of educational opportunities, resemble those trees

of the forest which for size and symmetry survive comparison with their stately relatives of the garden and the grove. Not infrequently, preachers are embarrassed by the very weight of their ill-used advantages, while in others the consciousness of shortcomings is an incentive to more strenuous efforts. The work of Gipsy Smith, who claims five continents for his parish, illustrates the point that the pulpit message chastened by the speaker's earlier hardships, and deepened by his intensive acquaintance with human nature, will go far. This modest servant of God, who has probably addressed more men and women than any other preacher of the day, has the good sense to recognize his limitations, to keep within them, to vitalize what he has to say with citations from his religious experience, and to beautify it with appropriate references to nature couched in simple and chaste language. I have seldom known the technique of the sermon exhibited more clearly than by Gipsy Smith. Yet it should be stoutly maintained that the wholesomeness and adequacy of preaching normally depend upon the acquisitions of learning and divinity which are to be disbursed by the preacher. Such are some wayside signs along the course which conducts you to the heart of your business, wherein a light gleams for you which some do not behold, because, like Plato's *Troglodytes,* they have no desire for a radiance they have not seen.

The third essential of preparation is the spiritual direction which must be given to the preacher's pre-determinations. Keep their orientation true to the heavenly vision from which nothing should deflect your every aim. Baptized into the Spirit, self-immolated for your task, intent on securing the requisite knowledge, and delivered from the notion that half measures can avail, you have still to bear in mind that the secret of effective pulpit utterance remains more or less unrevealed. Men who have not allowed the fervors of an early piety to die down for want of labor and of prayer, know that their greatest effects are not produced by concrete rules, which have but to be obeyed to insure those effects. Whether you prepare yourself or merely your sermons, or what is

infinitely better, both, you will soon discover the truth of Goethe's lines in *Faust:*

> "All theory, my friend, is gray,
> But green is life's bright golden tree."

However finely woven, the dragnet of homiletical science does not retain the subtle elements of personality, the thoughts beyond the accustomed compass of the mind, the ethereal moods and sublimated emotions of preachers whose creative moments are born from above. They have often thrust aside the stated rules that are supposed to govern pulpit discourse, and what they then advanced was not of that sibylline character which puzzles the hearer, but a sure word, voiced by a master of assemblies and driven home with regenerative strength to the hearts of the congregation. On the other hand, preachers addicted to a sensationalism united with superficiality, or to a formalism which fences about stale dogma, or to a traditionalism native to the tongue but foreign to experience, feel no special difficulty in furnishing you with the methods which they deem necessary to successful sermonizing. But the visioned preacher, while grateful for every legitimate aid, fights shy of codes and prescriptions, because he feels himself committed to a Gospel which surpasses human thought. Warned against the half knowledge in which untutored faith stagnates, he craves the Scriptural truths and principles that lend themselves to striking applications, and assimilates them until they become a part of himself. He accepts the vastness implicated in the modern view of the Universe, but the acceptance is qualified by his trust in the Sovereign of all worlds, Whose writ runs throughout their stupendous frame. His best utterances reveal the summits of the enraptured spirit, which are upheld by the strength of the reasoning mind. His upward progress from argument to exhortation and appeal is assured by his intimacy with the inward and outward evidences of divine truth. It is his prerogative to ascend the hill of the Lord, to stand in His

secret place and there to receive the inspiration which gives wings to his speech.

No preacher can reach that eminence without prayer, which when practiced as a habit and not merely as a stated exercise infuses in the human clay those celestial tempers that soften and mellow it, making it more plastic to refined spiritual impressions than the coarser fiber of the natural man. You can detect the parasite beneath the prophet's garb of him who endeavors to simulate the sanctity which only constant supplication supplies. Intellectual or æsthetic proclivities are never sufficient substitutes for earnest devoutness of motive and deed. True piety alone gives you that standing before God and men, which sacerdotal assumptions cannot impart nor secular invasions destroy. The grace which emanates from the prayerful preacher's very being, has but to pervade his sermon for its auditors to know that they will not miss the appointed path. When it is absent, entrancing oratory and bewitching music are nothing more than the stupefaction of real worship. Charles Lamb was wont to ask God's blessing before reading Shakespeare. Shall the genial essayist exceed in reverence and piety the religious advocate? Not so long as you recall that prayer is your guide to God through Christ the Living Way, when offered in the Spirit Who makes intercession for you. Your divine assistance in studying Holy Writ, and while the sermon is still on the anvil, and when it is being delivered, comes from prayer. You are not primarily wanted in the pulpit as logicians and philosophers, but as expert impressionists, who graphically portray the wonders of divine love which have captured your heart and mind. What you give forth there is the thinly veiled expression of your subjective life, its disappointments, hopes and achievements. It is the hidden man of the heart and not the official which counts. The sentences transcribed from the records of your own soul are those that penetrate other souls like arrows sped to the mark. The anatomy of the sermon consists in what you know about the text, but its life is derived from that fellowship with God which is the outcome

of believing prayer. If this fellowship was indispensable to Jesus, Who said, "I speak the things which I have seen with my Father," and "I do nothing of myself, but as the Father taught me,"[1] certainly it is indispensable for every minister of His. The preacher who does not enter into it presents the woeful spectacle of "the connoisseur in religion who knows all about it except itself, who has mastered everything respecting God, but not yielded his own spirit to the Infinite Reality."[2]

Personal piety is not to be too openly discussed, provided it is inwardly appropriated, and characterized by the effortless felicity of those who having companied with their Master seek God as He did in the noontide of reality. Richard Baxter, himself a saint who "walked closely," remarks upon this characteristic in the meditations and poems of George Herbert. The seraphic aspirations of the *Imitatione* of á Kempis, Law's *Serious Call* and Bunyan's *Grace Abounding*, the expositions and writings of mystics like Tauler, Boehme, Henry Vaughan and John Woolman, glow like summer lightning on the preacher's overcast sky, and remind him of the light that cannot be extinguished. The works of the foremost of modern mystics, William Blake, and the recently published Gifford Lectures of Dean Inge upon *The Philosophy of Plotinus* should receive the attention from you to which their unique merits entitle them. Dean Inge discusses in a scholarly and sympathetic way the life and ideas of the last of ancient thinkers who was also the precursor of mediæval dreamers. Plotinus occupied the watershed between the epochs of a brilliant but decadent paganism and a mystical realization of "the Power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness." The sages of the former world paced the porches of their philosophy, at times half aware of their impotence to unfold the mysteries of being. From thence they looked down upon the wandering hordes,

"Seeking and never finding in the night,"

[1] St. John viii: 28, 38.

[2] Dr. James Martineau: *Essays and Reviews*, Vol. IV, p. 43.

with whom they had nothing in common except a universal religious blindness. The contrast between them and the hierophants of Christian mysticism is well expressed in the unstudied loveliness and sublimity of Henry Vaughan's lines:

> "I saw Eternity . . .
> Like a great ring of pure and endless light
> As calm as it was bright."

The first of these epochs bequeathed much that we cannot afford to discard, but Plotinus perceived, as did Matthew Arnold long afterwards, that men could not live upon its bequests. The second epoch, ushered in by Plotinus, translated the native impulses of elementary piety into a purposed quest for the Highest Will, which is your heritage, rife with a religious opulence of its own. The affection of the mystics for hidden verities, the contagion of their fervent adoration, assist your vision of the ineffable glories of the Divine Being.

Nor are mystics to be avoided under the plea that they were impractical.[3] Many of them verified the saying, that saints are people who do ordinary things extraordinarily well. Although pioneers in the Invisible Realm, they were not found wanting in the mastery of earthly existence. Theologians, preachers, philosophers and philanthropists, who reduce the necessities and increase the well-being of mankind, owe much to the mystics. Their yearning for conscious inward union with their Creator or with His Christ, is not to be confused with the appetite for outward wonders and startling predictions found in their imitators. That union should be your preoccupation, the prize for which you ever contend, undeterred by the skepticism of alien environments. Do not be discouraged in striving after this crowning result of the life of prayer, for while you pursue you are pursued by the Eternal Lover, of Whom William Francis Thompson sings so boldly in *The Hound of Heaven.* Here is the converse of the Christian's quest audaciously depicted by the poet in terms

[3] Cf. Rufus M. Jones: *Studies in Mystical Religion,* p. xxx, ff.

of the Father's resolute search for His children. Divine love and wisdom assure your advance from the unquestioning credence of your first acquaintance with God into the light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

II

The fourth essential of pulpit preparation is a full and ready intimacy with the Bible. A preacher may have popular gifts and qualities, but he is a weaponless warrior in the thick of the battle, unless armed with the sword of the Spirit. I have nothing to say against your release from the groundless views of Biblical infallibility already referred to in previous chapters. Yet it is a somewhat dreary fate to emerge from the haze of these views, which at least instilled in multitudes a feeling of reverent awe, into the cold light of a purely critical temper that reveals nothing in the Bible to revere. Undoubtedly, Protestantism has been entangled in theories about the Book which, though intended to emphasize its authority, have actually impaired it. For if the religious upheaval of the sixteenth century was instigated by the discovery that the mediæval Church taught many doctrines not found in the Bible, the religious indifference of the twentieth century can be traced in part to the malpractice of some professional exponents, who read into the Book their prepossessions and treat it as a storehouse of proof texts, for the sake of ideas which not infrequently offend the moral susceptibilities of enlightened consciences. Every preaching age has its blind spot, and the infirmity of the contemporary pulpit lies in the stress it lays upon the intellect alone, whether in its cruder employment for the defense of archaic formularies, or its more advanced use for the reckless rejection of traditions which embody vital truth. Be concerned that the bright gold of your soul's sanctuary shall not be dimmed because of the intrusion of intellectual elements which only deal with abstractions in religion until they are suffused with spiritual imagination. Cherish the original significance of the Scrip-

tures which neither uncritical distortion nor destructive critical analysis can permanently conceal. When their last word has been said, the Bible still contains untold treasures alike for the conservative and the liberal preacher. Its teachings remain the miracle of all thought and time in religious literature, and though a denatured Gospel can be divorced from them, neither the benediction of God nor the approval of man rests upon it. Note the mutually exclusive schools of preaching, which range in their one-sidedness from rarefied culturism to evangelical perfectionism and stretch their ingenious barriers in numerous directions across the path of pulpit freedom. They may expatiate on the luxuries of an intellectual superiority or of an esoteric spirituality, but all alike are divisive and lack the magnitude, the grandeur, the regenerating power of the Word itself. The appreciation of these qualities of Scripture is as necessary to your propaganda as the reasoning mind. The Bible unifies and substantiates those essentials of preaching which without it are unrelated and unauthoritative. Desultory and shallow sermons are conspicuous for their ignorance of its contents and seldom fortify faith or build up the Church. Dissertations on current events and literary or other topics which have no religious realism in them are wearying to the worshiping soul. The corporate life of our Christian witness does not center in Homer, Dante, Shakespeare or Milton, but in the Old and New Testament writings. They integrate the most recent candidate for the ministry with the Christ of God, with the glorious company of the Apostles, with the goodly fellowship of the Prophets, with the noble army of martyrs, with the Holy Church throughout all the world. In them is the home of pulpit utterance, by virtue of which it enjoys protection, authority and acceptance.

Do not think me captious if I protest against the crowding out of the Bible from its place of parental precedence by other books, even those about the Bible. Since the eighties of the last century, the literature of pronounced evangelicalism has run concurrently with that of a searching historical

criticism. To-day works prone to be of the hot-house variety, or to praise a type of religious being which Christ Himself did not require, teem from the press, and volumes intended to prepare you for the more obvious and mechanical aspects of Christian discipleship have a still wider circulation. Meanwhile, the gulf between knowledge and ignorance of the Bible widens apace, and although the arduous services of modern scholarship have placed the light of the Scriptures upon a golden candle-stick, its radiance is neglected. Instruction in their teachings, if such it can be called, given in families, numerous churches and educational institutions, is lamentably deficient in quantity and quality, with the consequence that almost every strange absurdity or familiar heresy is foisted upon the Book. This is the more to be regretted since the Bible is your center of gravity in preaching. The pastor is compelled to observe that the worst penalty of spreading these false ideas is that they are believed, and he has to admit that this sowing of the tares in the growing wheat is one of the fatalities of freedom of interpretation. If you would offset the evils it creates, revive in your oncoming years the teaching office of a ministry that does not sacrifice the spirit to the letter of the Word, nor condemn the candid study of the letter as a perversion of its spirit. Preaching grounded in Biblical certitudes is the surest preventive of mentally dissolute pulpit performances, which, although they pass muster with the unwary, can no longer be palliated by pleas based upon the prospective good they may accomplish.

The true principle of Biblical culture preserves an accurate proportion between the studies that recall you to the pith and meaning of the sacred writings and those that introduce you to the best theological and homiletical literature. Preponderance should be given to the former, to the supreme matters they present, to reflection upon their processes and laws. Nothing within or beyond "the flaming ramparts" of the visible world is exempt from their jurisdiction. Whatever you require, from the remotest stirrings of religious realities inspired by the Spirit to those which He has blazoned

on the front of conscience and of reason, is here to be obtained. My chief difficulty in expounding the Scriptures does not arise from the critical and historical issues associated with their origin and content, but from my utter inability to encompass their marvelous dimensions as the vehicle of the Eternal Will. Their heights and depths hold me spell-bound. In them are altitudes one dare not attempt to climb and depths which forbid exploration. Yet many can testify that the man "who has lost his God can find Him again in this Book, and he who has never known Him is here struck by the breath of the Divine Word." Professor William Lyon Phelps has called attention to its influence not only upon celebrities of the past, but upon those of the present age. Ibsen, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Kipling, Wells, George Moore and other contemporary authors, some of whom openly avow their religious agnosticism, are a unit in the homage they pay to the Bible. Ibsen, that dark tempestuous spirit of the north, declared that he made it his principal reading; Tolstoy knew the New Testament well-nigh by heart; Dostoevsky read it for four years in his Siberian prison; Kipling's *Recessional,* which probably will outlive the rest of his compositions, is almost a paraphrase from the Scriptures.[4] No stage in the world's development can make these ancient documents obsolete, nor supersede their spiritual and ethical standards, nor prevent them from eventually blending the soul of the race with its Divine Author, the Spirit Who impels

> "All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things."

Dr. Pusey, when asked by his wife why he could not preach as Newman preached, gave among other reasons that he had been studying evidences when he should have been reading the Bible. Jowett of Balliol told a divinity student that if he would be a preacher he must first master the four Gospels. The entire Koran is recited daily in many Mohammedan mosques by thirty relays of priests, and countless followers of the Prophet can repeat from memory its six thousand

[4] Cf. William Lyon Phelps: *Reading the Bible,* pp. 17, 19.

verses. Yet I have known candidates for the Christian ministry to whom the Bible, including even the four Gospels, was practically a sealed book. They could not name the parables peculiar to St. Luke, nor give a synopsis of the discourses of St. John, nor recall the visions of the anonymous genius of the Exile, who portrayed the Suffering Servant of Jehovah. There are changes for the better, but to no such extent as the situation requires, and until the Bible is restored to its time-honored supremacy in the home, the school, the college and the study, the ministry and mission of the Church will continue to show the disastrous consequences of its neglect.

The fifth essential for the preacher's preparation is the vigilant selection and study of other books than the Bible, most serviceable to his purpose. I do not claim that you should rejuvenate that semi-legendary figure, "the admirable Crichton," but I must insist that few men can be competent teachers of the things of the Spirit unless they familiarize themselves with the best intimations of first class minds. In days crowded with various duties you will have to make a space for the reflective reading in which the soul has leave to grow, the mind an opportunity to resume its meditative habit. Theological students sometimes move on into their ministry proof against anything except the few volumes which coddle their particular beliefs and enforce their inherited ideas. Some escape this limitation by means of their innate originality, others bear its marks to the end. The preacher who accepts only selected principles couched in denominational dialects, and thinks, in so far as he thinks at all, on lines severed from the main avenues where the great thinkers are to be found, may tend a few sheep in some secluded fold, but he will not be summoned to the fray in which the formidable foes of faith and religion are smitten down.

The men and women you address acquiesce in the expansion of secular knowledge, consent to the authority it imposes, and in every way sustain its diffusion. But this knowledge needs the control of moral ownership and the refinement of creative works of the intellect and imagination. If these are not

forthcoming the material tendencies of the age may degenerate into a despotism similar to that which troubled the Roman Empire of the fifth century, when, according to Dill, government was brought to the verge of disruption because the rulers and patricians were wedded to a deadening conservatism which stifled their faith in a wider future for humanity. They were unable to imagine, even when confronted by tremendous forces for change, that society would ever cease to be what it then was. The analogy between a waning Empire and a growing Republic is necessarily incomplete; yet it has striking similarities which admonish the leaders of this nation that it must be kept in vital contact with the forces of the Kingdom which is "not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." [5]

The creative imagination and artistic conscience are not to be drudges of secondary affairs. The literatures of knowledge and of power which De Quincey defines and enlarges upon should be your constant aids. Clerics who entertain pious scruples about genuine culture substitute personal idosyncrasies for the obligations of their calling. Faith, however fervid, is apt to become feeble and inconsequent unless it is supplemented by those more generous attainments of learning which really become a part of character. The just reasons, telling allusions, appropriate metaphors and finished sentences which seem to spring from the practiced speaker's lips with magical fluency represent years of previous application. A score of assimilated volumes lie behind the passages in his discourse which enchain your attention, and what is outwardly the impromptu ranging of arguments in perfect array, the clothing of thought with felicitous rhetoric, is inwardly due to an orderly and well-stored mind, which proceeds with confidence and freedom toward its desired ends. Do not vex yourselves about originality, for Emerson laid that specter when he said that all literature since Plato was

[5] Romans xiv: 17.

a quotation. You cannot turn to any essay of the Sage of Concord without finding numerous citations from the best works. His frequency and suitability in appropriating the words of earlier writers provoked the comment of Oliver Wendell Holmes, that Emerson's quotations were like the miraculous draught of fishes. He was a striking illustration of Bacon's axiom that reading makes a full man; and so little did he lend himself to the idle vanity of seeking all the implications of a subject in his own head that he drew incessantly upon that fulness, nor was he seldom more likely to be at his best than when he had first borrowed a pregnant sentence from Plutarch, Cicero or any other of the masters.

Your first love belongs, as I have said, to books which bear directly on ethics, theology and preaching. Permit me to recommend in addition to those previously named Lecky's *History of European Morals* and his *Rise and Influence of Rationalism in Europe,* Principal Edward Caird's *Evolution of Religion,* Auguste Sabatier's *Philosophy of Religion* and also his *Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit,* W. L. Walker's *Christian Theism and a Spiritual Monism,* Professor James' *Varieties of Religious Experience* and *The Will to Believe,* Baron Von Hugel's *Mystical Element of Religion* and his *Eternal Life,* Sir Henry Jones' *Idealism as a Practical Creed,* J. R. Illingworth's *Divine Immanence,* Dr. Newton Clarke's *Outline of Christian Theology,* almost any of the works of Bishop Francis J. McConnell, Drs. A. B. Bruce, Marcus Dods, H. B. Workman, Charles E. Jefferson, James Denney and Professor Joseph Agar Beet, a commentator whose writings opened up for me the profound message of the Pauline Epistles. But I must desist from trespassing on a domain belonging to your professors and will only add that your selection should be made independently of the restrictive counsel which decries the use of literature at large in the making of the sermon. So long as their substance is subordinated to your main design, the right books are of the greatest service to the pulpit. A type of preaching

which begins and ends with Scriptural truths, amplified and enriched by an acquaintance with the writings of such authors as Martineau and Newman in homiletics, Burke and Lincoln in politics, Bacon and Montaigne in their essays, Shakespeare and Browning in poetry, and George Eliot and Meredith in fiction, vindicates the use of literature as a complement of the divine message. This message must be rid of the vulgarity of "journalese," and of perfunctory shibboleths that obscure its grandeur. You need have no hesitation in harking back to the writers whose rank has been assigned them by the verdict of Time. There may be doubts as to second-rate authors, "but the company of the masters, of those who know, and in especial degree of the great poets is," in Frederic Harrison's words, "a roll long closed and complete, and they who are of it hold ever peaceful converse together."[6] The best literature requires no searching for; it is advertised in the market place and translated into every civilized language. To appreciate even in a modified degree minds like Plato, Epictetus, Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Calderón, Corneille, Goethe, and other writers of whose importance the young student is less likely to be aware, such as Pascal, Wordsworth, Ruskin or Matthew Arnold, introduces you to epochs and ideas which enlarge your interpretations of life and truth. Apart from the pleasure and consolation they administer, which are the resources of educated men and women, they stimulate your processes of thought and feeling, and reduce redundancy, triteness and superfluous similes. The lover of good books lives in a world of his own, in which he watches the genesis and growth of events, surveys the utmost bounds of the past, forecasts the future and travels with Keats "in the realms of gold." In that world Richard of Bury found the dead as if they were alive, and Balzac returned from a crowded *salon* to the society of his prized volumes exclaiming, "Now for some real people!" A refuge

[6] *The Choice of Books*, p. 39. This little volume is replete with wise counsel.

from the domineering present, which would fain subdue you, is to be found in those literary studies which teach you how to conquer it.

Fellowship with the mighty spirits who bring at your bidding the fruit of their utmost labors, whose works, born of faith and hope, love and sorrow, comedy and tragedy, are either austere or rapturous and eloquent, in brief, redolent of human life in all its multiform phases, saves you from attributing an exaggerated importance to your own ideas, and shows how far the preacher may go without discovering the secrets of adequate thought and expression. For though you cannot make every arch a rainbow or every star a sun, faithful intercourse with the major poets, philosophers and essayists will add to the purity and effectiveness of your style and enable you to condense a wealth of meaning in a phrase. The majestic simplicity of Dante, the intoxicating rhythm of Shelley, the classic beauty of Keats, the tranquil spirituality of Wordsworth, the psychological insight of Browning, the perfect artistry of Tennyson, reveal the oneness of soul and inspiration which lives and moves in all these magisterial spirits. Should you be doubtful whether you have access to their great companionship, read *Lycidas,* or *The Ode to the West Wind,* or *Lines Above Tintern Abbey,* and if they arouse in you the indefinable sympathy which unites you with their authors, you have the right to claim kinship with them. But if they sound strange and seem to dwell in a realm from which you are excluded, stay with them until their glory is disclosed. Robertson of Brighton read many of the writers I have mentioned, and committed Dante's *Inferno* to memory during a single year. For the sake of his pulpit style William Lonsdale Watkinson transcribed *Paradise Lost* while he was still a probationer, and Robert William Dale always kept a copy of Burke's speeches at hand. These masters illuminated their sermons with rays from the shining orbs of the literary firmament, and thus created the effects which remind one of the lighting up from within of a great cathedral at dusk.

You have to remember what has been hinted about discrimination in literature. Nearly everybody reads to-day, few sit alone with idle eyes, and of the making of books there is no end. But how many read to purpose, and how few books are aught but ephemeral, with little or no literary consequence? Certainly popularity and worth do not run neck and neck just now, and though the tombs of the literary prophets are not forsaken, they are far from being the shrines of what we are pleased to call an educated democracy. The output of the press, groaning beneath the burden of new volumes, reminds one of the sardonic observation of Callimachus that the Euphrates was indeed a mighty stream, but it rolled down to the sea all the dead dogs of Babylon. No one among you will be foolish enough to imitate the witcheries of famous poets or attempt to don the robes of paladins of prose. Far otherwise; though you scan them intently, and retain what in them is worth while, their inferences, ideas and arguments should be discreetly used, passed through the crucible of your own mind, and steeped in its native thinking. Rapid readers seldom keep what they get, if indeed, they get what they should keep. Harriet Martineau was content to spend an hour with a single page; most of us can profitably do likewise. It would be difficult to imagine a more educative practice for stilted and conventional preachers than the absorption of the poetry and prose which have enriched the realms of religion and letters. The arduous drill of thinking through the propositions of an author like Kant, or Jonathan Edwards, who does not yield his treasures to any but the studious, is a corrective for valetudinarian piety. Yet reading and absorption of what is read are not in themselves final. I have met ministers "deep versed in books but shallow in themselves," who emphasized the anomaly mentioned by St. Paul of those who are ever learning but never coming to the knowledge of the truth. They fail to arrive because there is no vital correspondence between their inmost selves and the ideas they intellectually assimilate. One may carry whole histories and philosophies in his head,

but until they have captured his heart and imagination, he cannot successfully impart them to others. Again, you will meet ministers who grow in manhood and ability without visible effort, while others diminish in both despite their unquestionable lore, whose thinking, such as it is, becomes a shapeless thing, crushed beneath an inchoate mass of information. It was said of Macaulay, though not altogether justly, that his memory swallowed up his mind. Certainly had he been less profuse he would have been more cogent; but where his genius could trespass with comparative impunity, the ordinary person should not cast a glance. The discerning student knows that the end of his reading is not in the folio but in himself. He is neither to be imprisoned by the printed page nor to leave it until laden with its spoils. He offsets his tendencies to mere bookishness by his intercourse with life, finding in its dark and troubled problems or humane and benevolent aspects the amplest opportunities for personal growth. The more competent the minister becomes, the more anxious he will be to make his learning thoroughly compatible with the deepest spiritual culture and to align all his acquirements with the needs of his calling.

Changes in mental attitude and standards of determination constantly occur, and even the initiated cannot always anticipate or appraise them aright. You will best do this by dedicating your powers to the God of all wisdom, Whose Spirit enables you to judge life according to its eternal significance; and by keeping in touch with its many-sidedness, as this is revealed through great authors, the rich timbre of whose manifold voices should always be audible to you. No intellectual ideal of the ministry gets beyond the stage of dreamy desire until it has sojourned with you in every climate not only of the mind but of the heart. Abbé Bautain states the case pertinently: "The fund to be amassed by those who intend to speak in public is a treasury of ideas, thoughts and principles of knowledge, strongly conceived, firmly linked together, carefully thought out, in such a way that, throughout all this diversity of study, the mind, so far as may be,

shall admit nothing save what it thoroughly comprehends, or at least has made its own to a certain extent by meditation."[7]

Many clergymen have much of the divine messenger's equipment and still are not received joyfully. One source of their failure to connect is unsystematized thinking, which leaves sermonic material a confusion worse confounded. The preacher who is voluble without vision, passionate without reason, confused when he should be clear, and diffuse when he should be pointed, usually allows ideas to run riot in his brain, and there contend for priority of utterance. Once they are marshaled, and march forth at his behest like soldiers on parade, they carry with sequence what he purposes to convey. No intuition, however keen, nor facility of speech, however pronounced, can remedy the delinquencies mentioned unless you are philosopher enough to analyze your premises, logician enough to formulate them and prophet enough to previse their conclusions. The sum of what has been said amounts to this: that the preaching mind "is a tree of life, growing by the side of the river of God, and bearing all manner of fruits. To guard it sedulously, to study the laws impressed on it by its Creator, to enrich the soil around it, and so to develop it to its fullest stature and to the limits of its producing capacity, are not only plain duties which a share of our interest should dictate, but the most fitting acknowledgment we can make to God."[8]

III

Loose and unconsidered speech in the pulpit is to be strongly deprecated. The copious outpourings of one who is fluent but slovenly in style or indifferent to reasoned order in the treatment of divine subjects are an offense. At the same time, sermons are primarily intended to be heard rather than read, to have the character and qualities of the spoken word, not of literature, and this intention explains the fact that

[7] Quoted by Gilbert Monks: *The Preacher's Guide*, pp. 42–43.
[8] J. Brierley: *From Philistia*, p. 67.

only exceptional discourses are anything more than fugitive productions. Your problem is to avoid self-consciousness, which obstructs the free working of the preacher's mind, and conventionality, which separates preaching from the intelligent speech of other realms. Young ministers, whose habits of work are presumably not altogether fixed, should be concerned to become extempore speakers while they remain literary in their style. How can this be accomplished? There is no sole answer to the query and to discuss the question fully is beyond our present aim. Every man must follow his natural bent and adopt the principles of production and delivery which justify themselves in practice. One seldom listens to great preachers without wishing that he knew more of their methods of preparation. But most of them who have dealt with the matter recommend the full and careful writing of the sermon and its subjection to frequent revision. This process has been fertile in results, but these are best communicated by preachers who are unfettered by manuscript. Yet here again are exceptions to the rule. Chalmers wrote like a giant, and read as Jehu drove; Robert Hall robed his thoughts as they emerged, and believed that if his leading ideas were first mastered and arranged, words would take care of themselves, a belief which, if I am not mistaken, few preachers can safely entertain. Whether you read your sermons, which probably is the least preferable practice, or memorize them, which deprives you of some of the best results of preaching derived from the occasion, or write and extemporaneously deliver them, which I venture to think insures their largest benefits, incessant labor is always presupposed in each of these methods. Impromptu, memoriter and extemporaneous preaching have their respective advocates and meritorious examples. Nevertheless, impromptu speaking strictly belongs to conversation and debate, memoriter speaking to the sophomore and the actor, extemporaneous speaking to the statesman and the preacher. Each has its place and value, but impromptu speaking abounds in betrayals of pulpit efficiency, and "the moment that any one

becomes incapable of trusting himself without having a manuscript transferred wholesale to his memory, he loses the quality of a speaker and takes that of a reciter of his own writings.''[9] You perhaps perceive that my inclination runs toward writing, rewriting and pruning one's compositions, condensing and improving them in every possible way, never supposing that fecundity of expression will carry him through. Then take at most a brief abstract into the pulpit, expecting that you will utter some truths your hearers will gratefully remember. On the other hand, seize every lawful opportunity to speak impromptu, and by this means preserve the naturalness and directness of your pulpit utterance. The power of translating ideas which you have previously appropriated into their choicest forms of expressions, shaped and colored by your literary intimacies, not delivered by rote, but with apparent spontaneity, enables you to unite thorough preparation with freedom of delivery. Balance your reflections, recall the sentiments and sayings of premier men upon the matters you discuss, and even your impromptu addresses will seldom be without nuggets of good sense. An imperial memory performs astonishing feats for a time, but advancing years diminish its ability, and leave the preacher who has exclusively relied upon it in a parlous state. Impromptu speaking, however instructive, is liable to be crude and negligent. Extemporaneous speaking, based upon extensive writing and revision, will probably develop your preaching gifts more thoroughly and readily than either of the other two methods.

Pascal defined the sermon as ''a religious address in which the Word of God is stated and explained, and the audience is excited to the practice of virtue.'' The definition is clear but parsimonious, and savors of the reserve of a thinker whose acquaintance with preaching, as understood by Protestantism, had been casual and incomplete. There are other qualities in the sermon besides those covered by Pascal, and all are required for that presentation of divine truth in

[9] T. Bowman Stephenson: *William Arthur: A Brief Biography,* pp. 72, 79.

which its meanings are explained and its claims enforced, to the end that men may repent of their sins and trust the mercy of God in Christ Jesus for pardon and cleansing. The choice of texts of Scripture as the basis of pulpit discourse is a comparatively modern custom. The Fathers often expounded a part or the whole of the lesson for the day as found in the lectionaries; and Basil of Cæsarea refers in one of his homilies to four such lessons as the burden of his message. The forced connection to which this practice gave rise accounts for the hortatory and discursive character of the discourse of some Fathers, and also of later Roman Catholic, Anglican and Reformed divines. Yet preaching from the lesson of the day has always had its champions, and numerous excellent examples could be adduced in support of their contention. Nevertheless, I know no wiser plan than to choose a suitable text, provided you wed it to your theme and take care not to divorce it. Thus you reverence the Scriptures, invest what you have to say with their authority, and find a nucleus for your discourse which imparts variety, harmony and unity to its structure. It is one of the difficulties of the young preacher to select those passages of Holy Writ which appeal to him and are available for the use of his material as well as for the needs of the hour. His selection can be made in the light of two standing principles: first, that religion and nothing else is the supreme factor of human life, and, second, that the New Testament Evangel is the most vital theme of universal religion. Texts that lend themselves to extraneous, fanciful or disputatious treatment should be avoided, while those that lay hold on you so that you cannot escape them are certainly meant for your use. The profoundest experiences of Christian faith and fellowship recorded in the Bible summon similar experiences of your soul as deep calls unto deep. Respond to them in humble dependence upon the Spirit Who is God's Executive, and you will not be deprived of the guidance which leads into the greenest pastures and to the fountains of living waters.

When the text has been chosen, clearly determine from its

teaching and context the theme you wish to elucidate and the objective you have before you; then develop the theme as the smelter melts the ore, and articulate it with your main purpose as the smith fashions the metal according to pattern. If the process halts, read parallel passages that cast light upon the text, interpreting Scripture by Scripture after the manner of men adept in searching the Divine Oracles. Pastoral activities and holy rites alike have their place in your work, but the ministry of the Word should never be forgotten, nor its teaching and exhortation set aside in behalf either of machinery or rituals. Bunyan paints in *Pilgrim's Progress* the immortal portrait of the student thus engaged: "The Interpreter had Christian into a private room, and bid his man open a door, the which when he had done, Christian saw a picture of a very grave person hung up against the wall, and this was the fashion of it. It had eyes lift up to heaven; the best of books was in its hands; the law of truth was written upon its lips; the world was behind its back; it stood as if it pleaded with men; and a crown of gold hung over its head." Though the Bible has been read and expounded by prophets and teachers of every race, degree of talent and wealth of genius, and with a constancy such as no other literature has received, it still abounds in themes which yield the rarest spiritual treasures to the patient and devout seeker. Search the Scriptures, and your sermons will be filled with grace and benediction unto their hearers. A stimulating author, not necessarily though preferably an expert upon homiletics and theology, will often be of valuable assistance in building the discourse. The writers who have discussed in noble and weighty ways the meanings of life, who have sung them in the classics of poetry and enshrined them in moving prose, enable you to gain ascendancy over the sermon's making and to complete it with vigorous mentality and moral assurance.

St. Paul was never at a loss in the mystic power of inducing belief in others, which is the main design of preaching, because he had contact with his Living Lord. His

epistles, homilies, exhortations, social intercourse, prison messages and witness as a martyr were aflame with his religious experience. By means of one great doctrine he practically recreated the nations of the west. Like him, you have entered into a secret communion with Christ, the benefits of which are to be offered to all men. Your message to them is to a large extent the reproduction of your regenerated personality, and no texts, chapters, or books of the Bible which bear on that regeneration can be a dead letter for you. They state in unequaled phraseology the saving truths that glow and burn in your own hearts. Unite the testimony of your believing spirit with the confirmation it receives from Holy Writ, and I predict that while your preaching finds spacious flights in other directions, it will always return to the essentials of the Evangel as the bird returns to its nest. In the sermon, as in all else, life is more than meat, and the disciple who adores the perfect Ideal his Master embodies cannot be easily caught in the toils of will-worship, nor dally with matters too trivial for his hearers to endure. To follow Christ in this way is to repeat in your own fashion what He has authorized; but to treat with indifference or neglect the truth which His words contain is to incur the disgrace of defeat and the doom of the disloyal. Upon the walls of a mosque in Bagdad is inscribed the motto: "What a man believes he will die for; what a man thinks he will change his mind about." The inference is plain: the faith which signifies the most blessed life in yourself will thrust its theories and themes upon you and consume your energies in its behalf. The wandering stars of our calling were not polarized by that faith or they would have gravitated toward it as the planets toward the sun.

The Bible issues no code of injunctions to be applied to every conceivable preaching exigency, but presents to you a gospel which is spirit and life; prophecies and psalms which originated in a vital spiritual knowledge. Impelled by that spirit and that life you will move in your appointed orbit, and there shine with a reflected radiance. The reasoning mind which assails the doubts of current skepticism, the reforming

mind which strikes at the errors and vices of its age, the consoling mind which ministers to the sad and weary, the evangelistic mind which arraigns sin before the terrors of the law and brings sinners to the Cross for pardon are alike flashes from the illuminating mind of Christ. Every type of preaching that possesses His mind will prosper; it cannot be dull, nor cynical, nor sentimental, nor grotesque; and what it states is supported by the testimony of fact and experience. Inferior pulpiteers, who although they travel within the circle of preaching, seldom, if ever, arrive at its center, choose secondary or negligible themes because they lack religious truth. To you it is given to appropriate the themes which embrace the dramatic history of iniquity and redemption; to move as preachers amid glorious sceneries of Divine love, justice and wisdom in which what little we know is like the Rocky Mountains in comparison with the bulk of the earth. Surely, your only hesitation about texts and topics in the presence of these eternal shadows and splendors is caused by their very magnitude, and in the effort to realize them more adequately is the soul of genuine preaching. What inventive gifts you have can be first exercised upon some quieter aspects of Revelation, but eventually they will be brought into full practice by serving faithfully now the purposes of Divine grace. Great passions are kindled, great decisions made, great transformations wrought, by the preacher's commerce with the sublimer characteristics of the Gospel which encompass the race and lift it out of darkness into light. I do not say that you are never to be diverted from them, for the pulpit must be God's mouthpiece against all evil and for all righteousness. You are the best judges of the timeliness of such diversions, but they should be regarded as the exception and not the rule of your service. Nor is it to be forgotten that the preachers who have purified the social conscience were not addicted to what is called ethical as distinguished from evangelical preaching. They taught that good works were the fruit, and faith was the root of the tree whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. Hence the majority of lasting

reforms which are credited to the pulpit were obtained by men who proclaimed the Crucified and Risen Christ as the power and wisdom of God unto Salvation both for the individual and for society.

Stricken humanity waits for that proclamation now. Myriads, worn and distressed, are asking their would-be leaders, What is your secret, the fountain of your power? The materialist replies, Wealth; the militarist, Soldiers and steel; the Christian preacher, The Living God of all righteousness. Here is the point: can we, and shall we, communicate faith to the faithless, its strength to the languid? Their listless despair or fevered rush will not be cured by political measures and social re-organizations, unless these originate in the regenerating love of God and are controlled by the compassion and justice of the Evangel of Christ. In other words, apart from Divine assistance, political and social ameliorations are straitened in themselves and can accomplish little of permanent value. True reform is a product of divine life, and to go about it otherwise is to plant the heath in the desert only to be exterminated by its heated sands. If sound advice could redeem sinners or make saints, men would long ago have found their second Eden, but the recovery of Paradise waits upon the salvation of God which is in Christ Jesus. Prophets of the mundane militate against ideals the supernaturalism of which cannot be acclimatized upon the lower levels of human experience. They will tell you, even though they are not unanimous as to the course which moral revolution should take, that to be reformative is more useful for the age than to be mystical and prophetical. There is enough in what they say to provoke you to the works without which faith is dead; yet the prophet-like minister does not, any more than they, hear voices in the air or see visions on the horizon which send his wits astray or plunge him into the void of the purposeless. The external relations of life are not the first concern of ambassadors of the Unseen, nor should you forget that a preacher may emphasize social demands in lieu of the Gospel because he inwardly doubts its power to

transform life. The mysteries of the Christian Faith are not to be relegated to the background of preaching because they interfere with some accustomed ways of thinking. They will never acquiesce in the supremacy of the temporal, even when that seems beneficent, nor surrender the cardinal truth of the Incarnation to what is termed the rational mind. Nevertheless, there are inducements, some of them subtle enough, to believe that the temporal is sufficient. Later comes the painful awakening,—the smudge on the face of beauty, the palsied limb, the fading brain, the alloy in the precious metal of character, and with them the cynic: the man who has put his trust in the wrong things and the wrong people and is, in consequence, skeptical of everything.

Preachers who attempt a fatuous reconciliation with a humanity they do not first strive to reconcile to God, lower the temperature of their pulpits. They fail to satisfy the soul's felt needs, or to cleanse the mighty heart that beats in modern democracy. The mission of omnipotent grace against the sins of the age is your chief consideration, the staple of your thinking, the main theme of your discourse; and this mission and all it involves should be expounded in the name of Christ, in faith, in reason, and for its appointed ends. If the objection is raised that this kind of preaching lacks verification, and that you have no assurance it is not a fancy born in the cloudy hollows of the human brain, fall back upon the support of your own soul's communion, upon the witness of the Church, of the Bible and of Christian civilization. You are not among men to lower your standard to them, but to interpret them and their practices in the light of New Testament teaching. I would go further and say that it is not even conscience which frames your duty as God's servant; it simply reveals your duty, and bids you occupy till the Lord of the Vineyard appears. For you have not chosen Christ; He has chosen you, and "appointed you that ye should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide." [10]

[10] St. John xv: 16.

CHAPTER VIII

PREACHING: ITS PREPARATION AND PRACTICE
(Continued)

Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained a like precious faith with us in the righteousness of our God and the Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue; whereby he hath granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises; that through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust. Yea, and for this very cause, adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue; and in your virtue knowledge; and in your knowledge self-control; and in your self-control patience; and in your patience godliness; and in your godliness brotherly kindness; and in your brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he that lacketh these things is blind, seeing only what is near, having forgotten the cleansing from his old sins. Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never stumble; for thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Wherefore I shall be ready always to put you in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and are established in the truth which is with you.

II Peter i: 1–12.

CHAPTER VIII

PREACHING: ITS PREPARATION AND PRACTICE (Continued)

Types of preaching—Expository—Evangelistic—Didactic—Their limitations—Their blending—Henry Ward Beecher—Dr. Lyman Abbott—Variety in preaching—Nature and uses of imagination—Style—Essentials of good style—John Bright—Delivery—Its importance.

Sermons are usually divided into three main classes: the exegetical, the evangelistic, and the didactic. This classification is, however, more or less arbitrary, since preaching is essentially an expression of the thoughts and feelings of the human spirit in all its religious relationships. The exegetical sermon proceeds on expository lines and introduces the various teachings of the Scriptures as the guide of life and conduct. The evangelistic sermon incites its hearers to believe on Christ for immediate and eternal blessedness, and assumes that the cleavage between the saved and the lost is made by the Word spoken and heard. The didactic sermon belongs to a ministry of instruction and addresses itself primarily to the understanding and the will.

Exegetical or expository preaching, which, viewed broadly, may now be said to include the textual type, was adopted by most of the Fathers before the fourth century, and was practiced by St. Chrysostom, whose habit it was to take a sacred book and expound it verse by verse from the beginning to the end. Spurgeon and Alexander Maclaren were modern examples of this school; and *The People's Bible* is Joseph Parker's monument as an expository preacher. There is much to be said for this method, especially when it deals with the outstanding passages of Holy Scriptures, and at the same time shows their setting in the general purport of the sacred docu-

ments. The history of any one of the great words of the Bible, such as life, love, light, wisdom, is more interesting than that of a campaign. The microscopic study of these words and phrases and of the text of the two Testaments has left its indelible mark upon the British pulpit and aided it in formulating those Biblical interpretations which have advanced the art of preaching. On the other hand, many of the foremost American divines, among them Edwards himself, were given to a type of sermon that dealt with great doctrinal themes. It was an age in which the life of Protestantism found expression in schools of preaching that exhausted theological dogmas and were resolute in controversy. Later these sermons took another direction due to the development of the young nation. While to-day some American preachers are expository, the larger number are topical in their mode of sermonic treatment, and not a few sacrifice the authority derived from a full and accurate knowledge of the Bible. The necessity for expository preaching is accentuated by the present condition of the English-speaking peoples. In spite of universal education and of a rapidly rising standard of civilization, there is no great solicitude in the hearts of these peoples for a religious revolution. A better city is being sought by them, but it is not the city in the heavens whose maker and builder is God. The confines of the literal and the temporal encircle them, and much of the truth they know is of the kind which puts an end to hope. One would be thankful to see their inevitable reaction toward the spiritual, come how it may, and how could it be better expedited than by the forceful exposition of truths which are of fundamental importance for every age?

Battles are often fought, as every soldier knows, not as they were originally planned, but as they can be fought. Similarly, sermons are frequently shaped by current issues which seem beyond the control of reason or religion. The advocates of radical doctrines who flout all existing systems, especially those which claim to be spiritually authoritative, will in the end be defeated by the systematic presentation of

those imperishable verities which make the Bible the grandest moral heritage of mankind. The application of its truths to the life of to-day should be regarded as one of the surest means for successfully combating anarchy and usurpation. Expository preaching has its perils, however, and many who practice it weave into the text meanings which rest upon the slenderest foundation. An undue pressure is put upon the letter of the Word, and one sometimes wonders if all that is thus extracted would prove grateful to the original authors. The utterances of psalmists, prophets and apostles are treated as though they were nothing more than a canvas for meticulous embroideries of emendations, comments and far fetched inferences. In so far as the propensity to treat the Scriptures with the utmost reverence degenerates into letter-worship, it becomes injurious, and will have to be checked by a more scientific theory of interpretation, which postulates that the Bible is literary as well as dogmatic. Dr. Dale dealt with its books in a large way, not in their minutiæ. His purpose was to trace the wide outflow of thought and feeling in the writer's mind; to fix the leading landmarks by sailing from point to point across the intervening deeps, and not to work around the coast, exploring every inlet and river. His son assures us that Dale left his hearers with a distinct idea of the standpoint of the books he expounded, and one which was all the clearer because it was not overloaded with detail.[1] Follow his example: avoid additions that submerge the text and the highly speculative features that have marred exegetical preaching in the past. Concentrate upon the words and sentences of Scripture that stand out like mountains on a lonely shore, upon the prophecies, gospels and epistles, which have in them strength, vastness and loveliness.

The evangelistic type of preaching has always expressed the spirit of aggressive Christianity, and its history has much to teach you concerning the intrepidity and success of God's ambassadors in every epoch. You can hardly discharge the

[1] A. W. Dale: *The Life of R. W. Dale*, p. 198.

obligations of your calling until you have made it plain that, whatever may be your attitude towards the evangelical doctrine, you share the zeal its advocates have manifested. They formed my earliest ideals of preaching, and showed me that the life-giving power of Christ was present and active in all varieties of human experience and effort. Think of the ardent energies of those masters of exhortation, whose words vibrated with that power, whose sermons were engraved on the memories and consciences of their hearers, translating them out of the kingdom of darkness into that of light, and preserving the society to which they ministered from moral ruin. Their knowledge of the plain people and their resolute faith in the redemptive efficacy of the Cross were supplemented by the teachings of other preachers of the same persuasion who could establish theological positions, state arguments, appreciate difficulties, and solve doubts. All alike were evangelical men, and there were many among them whose mental acumen and inclusiveness were as pronounced as those of preachers of any other school. The provincial notion that to be an evangelical in belief or evangelistic in method is an indication of intellectual inferiority, exists only in those circles whose habitués have not understood the ampler reasonings and implications of this widespread interpretation of the Gospel.

Evangelistic preaching has also been exempt from the infirmities due to isolation. It has not pinnacled its ministries far above the ordinary ways of life nor made its merits to rest upon its remoteness from the crowds. Its insistence that notable gifts are the correlatives of divine grace and of endless labors; that no preacher, however situated, is born to cater to congenial coteries, and that it is a perverse, unmanly habit, without defense, to use his talents for the few and hide them from the multitude, is symptomatic of the spirit of Christ. Evangelistic preaching has been measurably justified in its diagnosis of the night side of human nature. The tyrannies of the lower self, its lawlessness and corruption, have been arraigned by ministers of the persua-

sion in question, who were not disposed to treat the Bible's somber denunciations of sin as mere phrase-making. Transgression, as they estimated it, was something more than the surfeit of human behavior, chargeable to the wear and tear of evolution, as if men were the creatures of their own environment and gave to iniquity an enforced allegiance. Sin to them was a heinous offense against God and a relentless warfare upon righteousness; but it was often conceived of by them in the terms of that hard-and-fast dualism which is not the best interpretation of life. They regarded the death of Christ as a full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice and propitiation for sin, a transcendent act of Divine Love by which man is reconciled to God. Their philosophizings upon subjective and objective theories of the Atonement increased the hold of this doctrine upon the Church and showed how it bore upon human rebellion and ruin and the Divine Redemption. Judge evangelistic preaching, then, by its great exponents, among whom are not a few sacred poets whose lyrics have echoed its tenets around the world. Do not allow the caricatures of antagonistic cults nor the distorted conceptions of hyper-emotional devotees to prejudice you against the evangelistic pulpit. At its best, as represented by Whitefield and the Wesleys, Charles Simeon and Henry Melville, Charles G. Finney and Dwight L. Moody, Charles Haddon Spurgeon and Hugh Price Hughes, and last, but not least, by eminent missionaries in non-Christian lands, that pulpit reached a zenith which many of its censors could well afford to reflect upon.

As I have previously hinted, the ministry which does not include periodical and specified efforts for the conversion of souls and their inbringing into the Church is not in the full sense a Christian ministry. But do not enter upon such efforts without being equipped for them, for no task is more exacting upon the intellect or the heart, or requires a larger endowment of judicious sympathy. It was, in the words of Silvester Horne, "the most gifted of the Apostles, St. Paul, whose spirit was fired with a consuming passion for evan-

gelism, before which all the old racial barriers went down like a bowing wall and a tottering fence." Much evangelistic preaching would be more effective if careful thought were given to the methods that insure its fruitfulness. Reliance upon the Spirit of God, earnest prayer and personal reconsecration will do much to determine the substance and manner of that propaganda which makes you fishers of men. On the other hand, the craving to reach audiences *en masse*, without any attempt to realize their innumerable differences of temperament and circumstance, or the relative degree of their spiritual attainments, has been prolific of mischief. Another hindrance to Evangelism is the idea that the purpose of the Gospel is limited to personal salvation, a notion which induces some of its radical adherents to speak slightingly of the solution of social problems. And the tendency to forget that separation of the sheep from the goats takes place at the Judgment and not in the pulpit; that the keys of Death and Hades hang on one girdle and only one convinces many thoughtful people that while it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, it would be more fearful to fall into the hands of some of His presumptuous servants. For these and other reasons, among which are its overwrought appeals to prudential rather than to more elevated motives, the evangelistic type of sermon, while all important so far as it goes, is not exhaustive. It does not supply the unified basis for preaching which is still to seek, a basis as essential in divinity as in philosophy or physical science. Neither the Church nor her ministers can always be in the hortatory mood, or favor one kind of discourse to the exclusion of the rest. Moreover, preaching stales by constant repetition, a fact which necessitates the frequent migration of the evangelist. Pulpit themes are speedily exhausted when they are derived from the rudiments of the Gospel. I know that the cry ascends, "Make the immediate conversion of souls your single aim!" and that those who utter it are right so far as the beginnings of the Christian life are concerned. For the majority of men and women

trim their course by the lodestar of a single trait and can be profoundly moved by elementary exhortations. One pregnant truth of the Evangel will often act as surely as the reagent which cleans a tube of its cloudy chemicals. But the systematic development of your parishioners in Christian ethics and the emphasis upon their progressive holiness of life and habitual fellowship with God, are no less imperative duties than that of evangelization. Further, although I share the conviction of the warmest advocate of immediacy that the genesis of the life of faith is for every heart its capital event, I am also persuaded that the noblest results of that life are accomplished slowly, silently, by repeated acts of divine grace and by its recipients' habitual self-sacrifice. The great works of God, whether in nature or in man, should not be measured by visible results which impress vulgar sense, but by the endless patience and majestic strength of the Eternal Workman.

The transition from the evangelistic to the didactic sermon is frequently made by ministers after the first flush of their youthful exuberance has subsided. Many commence as flaming heralds of the Cross and end as pastors who feed the flock. This process has never appeared altogether commendable to me, since the two types should blend with the expository type to form one whole. Sermons which aim directly at the conversion of souls and are not wise beyond what is written also strengthen the godly purpose of the devout to make their calling and election sure. Some preachers retain an inkling of their former fervor and appeal to their evening audiences for surrender to Christ, as if these, like their message, could be viewed separately. Not all the regenerate rise with the sun; not all the unregenerate tarry until nightfall. On the contrary, experience shows that the average morning congregation has in it those whose supine attitude toward the Kingdom of God is almost as demoralizing as the depravity of the profane. Tear off, then, with a firm but tender hand the veils of pharisaical complacency, which conceal Divine love and justice from hearers but not doers of the Word. Give free rein to every variety of sermonic utterance that

satisfies the spiritual needs around you. Do not permit the avenues of expostulation and entreaty trodden by Christian apostles and prophets to be barred against you by the edicts of a mere selectivism. And if you prefer didactic preaching, do not cozen yourselves into the belief that you become a competent minister of the Word only when you eliminate every trace of impetuous zeal from your utterances. In this connection the didactic preacher should remember that life is his greatest teacher. For it is one of the numerous paradoxes of our calling that an acute sensibility to the psychology of the congregation is one of the secrets of the preacher's power and also a source of his pain. Yet men who have been educated for the pulpit, but whose readings in the book of life have been few and far between, do not easily realize that sensibility unless they are natively absorbent of the feelings of others. The theater can teach us lessons bearing on this point. It would be possible to arrange a college course for actors, but I am told it has not been done. As things are, the self-taught, self-supporting person who has an ambition for histrionics but has never been inside a college, invariably makes the renowned actor; while the college-bred person seldom, if ever, does. A well-known authority declares that stage genius emerges from the ranks of poor but sturdy folk who, aware that ours is a world of toil and loss, nevertheless cheerfully and courageously shoulder its burdens without idle repinings or even a thought of surrender. From those ranks of the obscure, which too many well-placed clergymen know only by hearsay or slight acquaintance, the great interpreters of the drama come. They share the elemental impulses, fears, hopes, hates, loves, griefs and joys which more artificial or less experienced natures do not know. If they share them for the sake of dramatic fiction, how much more should we for the sake of sacred truth. The constriction of the feelings in didactic or philosophic preaching is a congealing process which leaves some well-informed but non-communicative divines as cold as moonlit sculpture. Be receptive, be sympathetic, teach as Thomas Arnold taught, who helped to change

the superstructure of English society from the master's desk of a single school. Think with the heart as well as the head, apprehend by intuition as well as by judgment. The sensitized teacher, as acutely impressionable as he is intellectual, will light up the living Book for living men. He will neither sink into the dryness of the erudite pedant, nor the saccharine effusiveness of the emotionalist.

Many a preacher has been a humbler sort of Browning, though not even a shadow of St. Thomas Aquinas. Without the scholarly accomplishments of the theologian in the formal meaning of the term, he has nevertheless been endued with perceptive wisdom by his varied experiences of God and men, experiences which have enabled him firmly to believe and aptly to express vital truths. The larger number of you will have special need of these qualities I have mentioned, for you will be pastors of individual churches, and preach to congregations chiefly composed of those who have professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and purposed to lead a Christian life. It is a lofty but an onerous occupation to stand before God's children for a score or more of years and give courage and guidance to those who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, honor and immortality. There is a widespread conviction in religious circles that modern preaching is defective in its instructive qualities. But if there is to be teaching in the pulpit, there must be an intellectual movement in the pew, and laymen and ministers alike will have to serve God not only with the heart but also with the mind. The assured gains of the teaching prophet will vie with any accruing to expository genius, evangelistic fervor, or imaginative eloquence. A striking instance of those gains is found in the contrast between two distinguished ministries in Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, which has enjoyed the widely different but complementary preaching of Henry Ward Beecher and Dr. Lyman Abbott. After the amazing breadth and diversity of the first pulpit celebrity of his age came the quiet, cogent and logical sermons of the modest saint and scholar. Dr. Abbott had not the slightest intention

of becoming Beecher's successor, but as his friend and admirer he stepped into the breach until it should be manned by a second Beecher. Needless to say this paragon could not be found, and the Christian world is familiar with the sequel. The reasoned and weighty utterances of Dr. Abbott; the singular appositeness and clearness of his exposition of the Bible at a critical era in its interpretation; the wisdom and catholicity of his application of the truth he knew; and his submission in thought and deed to the law of Christ, renewed the life of an historic church which for many years has been the cathedral of American Puritanism. Reflect upon this demonstration of the possibilities of a didactic ministry, which was also in the best sense inspirational, and it will obviate the necessity for further comment upon a type of preaching that not only carries on the religious culture of a congregation but becomes a world-wide instrumentality for the furtherance of the Gospel, in ways eminently worthy of the manifold grace of God.

It would seem to be the natural conclusion that the exegetical, evangelistic and didactic types should be employed in due proportion for the comprehensive purposes of preaching and upon this conclusion every sermon, however classified, can rest its case. Their various types will have to be intimately connected with the germinal ideal of preaching, which is best seen in its final aim. That aim has been defined as the entire reconstruction of manhood after the pattern laid down by St. Paul, in "the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."[2] If this description of your office is understood as meaning the reconstructed human society through regenerated men, it will be amply sufficient for your purposes. In it is the basic and unifying idea of all types of preaching, an ideal which blends individual with universal good, and presages the

[2] Ephesians iv: 12–13.

truth of another familiar Pauline passage concerning the whole creation which groans and travails in pain together until now, waiting "for the revealing of the sons of God." [3] Preaching as thus conceived releases those flights of prophecy which ennoble the sermon, while at the same time it remains practical in matters of character and conduct. I know that our desire for the new creation in Christ of a transformed earth, which brings all powers of body and soul, forms of service and sacrifice, tribes and kindred and policies of nations into conformity with the Everlasting Will, may seem to materialistic thinkers like the longing of the moth for the star. But God Himself has designed it, and the Gospel makes known the design. It is interwoven in the solemn predictions of the Sacred Oracles; it shapes their promises and precepts, and peals forth in their judgment and their mercy. Tennyson's famous line:

"Ring in the Christ that is to be,"

seems to anticipate a future revelation which would adapt Christianity to the advancing needs of civilization. Jowett of Balliol believed that orthodoxy was fatigued, and would have to be revived and revised. Yet we look, I think, not to any change in the fundamentals, but to their deeper apprehension by Christian consciousness and their dominance in the trend of Christian commonwealths. Shall we abandon the ideal of preaching upon which that apprehension and dominance humanly depend? On the contrary, since it is the Eternal Spirit Who speaks the life-giving Word, we cannot forbear to utter it as He shall direct us, and for those preachers who desire to bring their thoughts into subjection to the thoughts of God, who would view things as He views them and not as custom makes them appear, there is a great gladness in their surrender to the perfecting Ideal of their ambassadorship. Do not, however, force yourself in any direction, nor forget that while the truths you explain are eternal,

[3] Romans viii: 19, 22.

the explanations are temporary. Cast your nets into the sweep of the wide waters of humanity and divinity; be expository, hortatory, evangelistic, didactic, topical, prophetical, as the sermon and the circumstances seem to require, but in all instances be vital.

Variety is another element in the preaching which has a funded interest for every sort of mind. To achieve it successfully include in your survey the reflections of philosophers and historians, poets and essayists; the unfoldings of Nature's workings by scientists, and aught else which conduces to the exposition of your theme. The pleasure derived from contemplating the development of these varied pursuits of knowledge is very real, but it is not equal to the pleasure of interpreting them in behalf of religious edification. One of the best preachers of the age draws upon scientific and agnostic literature for many of his most effective illustrations. From the first he revolted against the unctuous boasts and pitiful performances of much that was then widely accepted as evangelical preaching, and his ministry has been a rebuke of the superficial mentality that dwarfs the presentation of the Gospel. He took spoil from the foes of faith; turned their flank, and declared that evolution in the hands of Darwin supported religion, and fiction in the pages of Thomas Hardy mirrored the blackest gloom of theology without its brightness. Browning discovered in *Caliban upon Setebos* the deep degradation of the human heart; and the romantic savage with his flowery barbarism, as delineated by Rousseau and other optimists of his school, was a far different and a sadder creature in the faithful depiction of the modern anthropologist. The conclusion drawn by this eminent preacher is that nearly every New Testament doctrine that teaches the abnormal bias of mankind toward evil and the necessity for its redemption is confirmed by the scientific and skeptical thinking of the age, a conclusion the recent war seems to sustain. F. W. Robertson said he read Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Tennyson and Coleridge for views of man to meditate upon, instead of theological caricatures of humanity; and went out into the

country to feel God; and read the life of Christ to understand, love and adore Him. Evidently these pulpit masters were largely benefited by material which some preachers anathematize, because they lack the astuteness and breadth to employ it rightly. The best sermons resemble a cathedral in which several styles of architecture blend well together as at Winchester. Here you have the massive Norman shell encased in the later Early English Gothic, the stately framework of nave, aisles, transepts, ambulatories, chapels and choir, upon which a profusion of detail has been lavished. Similarly the sermon-builder selects massive principles from the Scriptures, fits each idea into its place, is jealous for the accuracy and symmetry of the whole, and determined that fancies shall not usurp the realities upon which his imaginative treatment depends. Then just as the instreaming light, mellowed by its passage through many decorated windows, gives beauty to the ancient fane, so upon such a sermon as I have indicated falls the radiance of the Spirit of God.

This variety in preaching is likely to correspond with the variety of motives which bring men to Christ. Some come to Him under a sense of duty; others in the hope of escaping from the moral meagerness and dissatisfaction of their lives; still others, because they are driven to Him by those instincts of the spiritual being which give them no rest till they have found it in Christ; and the vast majority, because they are profoundly conscious that He alone can deliver them from sin. Their repeated failures and uncertainty of themselves in the presence of the most ignoble temptations accentuate their feeling of need. Again, not a few of His incipient disciples are generous in their moral aspirations. The ideals of a goodness that seems unattainable apart from Christ challenge their backwardness, and once they learn that His laws are promises and that every command He gives carries with it the strength to obey it, their faith is enlisted and their vision purified. Dr. Dale pertinently remarks that "the City of God has twelve gates: every one of them is a gate of pearl. What presumption it is to insist that unless men enter by a

particular gate they cannot enter at all! Let them enter by the gate which is nearest to them. Nor should we insist that to reach the gate itself there is only one path."[4] The necessary adjunct of variety is found in the maxim *Le cœur dans le metier,* which applies not only to preaching but to the whole field of human endeavor. Your heart in your work is the key to pulpit success.

Preachers of an ardent temperament should cultivate the moderation which offsets their extravagance, while those of a phlegmatic sort need the quickening impulse. You speak effectively not by suppressing but by commingling opposite qualities of thought and utterance. He who is afraid of enthusiasm should seek its impetus; his sanguine brother should incline to sobering reflection. Could some men's matter be given to other men for delivery and some men's delivery be given to other men's matter, the exchange would be mutually beneficial. Preaching reiterates generally accepted religious truths and theories, which require more than the wisdom of this world for their enforcement, and its practice in any of the forms mentioned falls back upon the God Who inspires its sources. His understanding of your difficulties is a pledge of their removal and the fact that you face them with a clear idea of their character is for you a religious experience of no mean value. Confronted with sin, suffering and death, you become aware of that dynamic from above which makes you conquerors of these things. What matter then the little controversies upon which some preachers have wasted time and energy, the sterile prescriptions and devices which are but artifices of the mortal mind? Your ministry proclaims the divine redemption, its vigils are a living fellowship with the Risen Christ, its fidelity to every obligation secures His blessing upon it.

You must articulate the bones in the body of your sermon, or its adverse fate is sealed. Assuredly principles and facts have to precede their consequences, and the reasonings which develop these be so closely related that each argument will

[4] *Nine Lectures on Preaching,* p. 217.

contribute to the strength of the discourse. Some ministers prefer to conceal the vertebræ of their homily; others have in mind its beginning but not its end, and set out to write it, not knowing whither they go; a third group puts forth in stated form the several heads to be discussed. The first method is perhaps the best, the second decidedly the worst, the third the least practiced now; yet all three have their good features, and one need not dogmatize about them. The preacher who fully develops his outline and also clothes it skilfully should be your model. After accurately surveying his lines of thought, he pursues them with a harmonious strength of purpose and presently the audience finds itself, to its delight and profit, in the stateliest palaces of truth and reason. He who follows the second method, composing his sermons solely to clear his own mind and delivering them as written, may end in bewildering the minds of his hearers. Yet frequently a seed thought becomes its own inspiration and displays a self-direction which appears in the sequel. I do not recommend you to do this unless what you write is treated as raw material to be recast and definitely shaped according to a previous design. The third method, although somewhat archaic, has the pronounced merit of stamping upon the memory the points it enunciates, and frequently these are retained after the rest of the sermon is lost.

II

George Eliot once spoke of "the disease of other-worldliness" as the affliction of the preacher. If a habitual sense of the invisible is a disease, then you cannot have it too virulently; for you must feel and know the grandeur of things unseen and eternal. Concrete details, inductive instances, immediate objectives, are dependent for their effect upon your communion with the spiritual world, and, as Hawthorne observed, the truest condition of that communion is to keep the imagination sane and vigorous. This is too rarely done to enable preachers to move naturally in the sublimest of all

themes and experiences. Therefore I would impress upon you the value of that gift, which, above all others, sustains preaching and secures the closest attention of its hearers. Imagination is not only specifically fitted, when legitimately exercised, to meet the tastes of the cultured, but it has also much to offer to the prosaic multitudes which are absorbed in their constant struggle with daily needs and cares. Formative influence may be a prerogative of genius, but talent quickened by the imagination often becomes nearly as intuitive as genius. We should contemplate human nature not in the stiff and precise ways which conventional sermons adopt, but as a great novelist sees and tries to describe it. Against its shortcomings and dangers you set in their full force the majestic ideas of God, of Christ and of the Cross, arresting its downward drift, handling aright its complex sensibilities, and touching its subtle, delicate shades to nobler issues. How can this be done unless we are at every stage anticipatory and busy making over everything with which we deal into forms more suited to the real ends of life? Such work is in the best sense imaginative and spiritually constructive. For man comes to the end of his material demands to find that he is only at the beginning of his moral requirements. He also has a hunger of soul which nothing seems able to appease. Longings which nothing visible can allay torture him. If he can be assured that there is no human being who does not have a special rôle to play in the great drama of the race; that no spirit is so insignificant as not to be unspeakably dear to God Who made the visible worlds, or so feeble that its actions may not have momentous consequences long after this material system has been dissolved; if, in brief, he is persuaded that he has a lasting place in the general scheme, for him chaos is supplanted by benevolent rule. In the use of the imagination the preacher bodies forth the forms of God's love and power which thus control the universal order and reconcile its rational creatures.

"It is difficult," as Professor Winchester remarks, "to

give a clear definition of imagination, partly because the word often seems to be used in a vague and mysterious way, as if there were something inexplicable in the power it names, but principally because the same word is used to cover several mental processes alike but by no means the same."[5] Of the creative imagination, he says that it "spontaneously selects among the elements given by experience and combines them into new wholes. If this combination be arbitrary or irrational, the faculty is called fancy."[6] Hence we have to differentiate between imagination and fancy; the former is so filled with the essence of actuality that it is truth in sentiment and, conversely, sentiment in truth. The poets, who often have best understood Jesus, more nearly told not only what He taught but what He was than many of His professed exponents. Innumerable saints have also interpreted religion through the imagination, and resemble the poets in their intimacy of appreciation. Familiarity with sacred realities is the sustenance of the preacher's imaginative power. Where there is no foundation of fact for imagination to spring from there is a flagging of its sure upward flight. Shelley's intellect was not given to the grasp of truth so much as to the refinement of theories and the distillation of exquisite abstractions. The result was that even his superlative gift runs somewhat riotous in an etherealism that would have been more impressive had his understanding been more profound. Idealizations are legitimate only when they consist of what one has verified, and for the preacher possessing the qualities of which I have spoken, who of necessity proclaims themes which surpass the choicest expression, "the ideal is never properly contrasted with the true, but with the actual." Such being the case, he dwells in a realm of his own, where he cannot rest content until he has brought others into its commonwealth. It was Beecher's surpassing virtue as a preacher that he could make the unseen the most real of dwelling places for the soul. Despite their

[5] *Some Principles of Literary Criticism*, p. 119.
[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 123–124.

rebellious selves, those who heard him felt that he knew of what he was speaking; that it was not the product of enthusiasm, but of a reasoned use of faith which I should call the highest employment of the preacher's imagination.

I have spoken of poets as our mentors; but are they not more free of earth's contingencies than we? *Paradise Lost,* as Bagehot observes, does not represent the time of Charles II, nor *The Excursion* the first decades of the last century. On the contrary, Milton withdrew from the sons of Belial of his day, and in his poetic liberty consigned them to outer darkness; and Wordsworth resented the intrusion of manufacturing England upon his priesthood of Nature. But the case of the preacher is entirely different. From its inception his work is inextricably involved in surrounding life; he has to cast his sermons in the mould of the minds of his hearers, receiving from them in sympathetic response that which he pours upon them in his discourse. This concurrence of pulpit and pew as, in a sense, the joint parents of preaching, is not sufficiently recognized by advocates of a homiletical doctrine of perfection. Yet notwithstanding the limitation, you are not so bound down that you must be what the age would have you be, or else little at all. On the contrary, the preacher can break the chain of custom by his imagination and gain the freedom he requires.

There is nothing peculiar in the process of envisaging what has been experienced. Past, present and future are imagination's sphere; art, literature and science depend upon its exercise. Physical laws and theories, philosophical and political systems are due its intuitions quite as much as to observation and experiment. Whatever scientific thinkers, historians, statesmen, as well as orators, poets and artists, have heard, seen, learned and laid up in their memories—an unindexed and measureless quantity—is transfused and brooded over by the imagination. It was one of Goethe's axioms that imagination is the necessary gifts of every great thinker. The seemingly unhampered workings of minds like Newton, Darwin, Gibbon, Burke, Hamilton and Lincoln vindicate Goethe's

belief: they cannot be accounted for apart from the possession and exercise of that faculty. Apply the process to the preacher in the act of making his sermon. The loathsome forms of sin and the winsome forms of grace take shape before his mental vision. He is stirred by detestation of iniquity, and lost in adoration of goodness. The separation between unrighteousness and righteousness, which no human mind has fully traversed, is visualized by his imagination. Through it he anticipates the presence of his people and provides for their respective needs: consolation for the sorrowful, relief for the heavy laden, entreaty for the wayward, rebuke for the perverse, stimulus for the zealous, devotion for the saintly. Thus the morning and evening sacrifices are prepared, and while they evolve, visions of departed ones hover before him: of those who are nearer to him in the spirit than they were in the flesh. The innocence of childhood, the buoyancy of youth, the gravity of manhood, the pathos of age, are photographed upon his mental retina. Obvious truths and others not so obvious pass before him, some of which he greets as familiar acquaintances, while others he has yet to know more fully. His mind is advantaged by his glimpses of the hills of God; of Sinai, where the Law was given; of Horeb, where the prophet of restoration was recommissioned; of Hermon, where one of Christ's transfigurations was witnessed by His adoring disciples. He too is seen, the Way, the Truth and the Life, whose eternal voice is ever saying, Come unto me; believe in me; for I am your strength and your peace. All are mounts of light, toward which the preacher would fain direct the worshiping gaze of his hearers. Then, if ever, his creative faculties subsidize the present and the future from the treasures of the past, and memory seconded by imagination renders him royal service. In the pulpit his prepared word levels all distinctions, exudes a vital atmosphere and makes its own progress. The clew to its more mystical meanings is well expressed in William Blake's stanza:

> "I give you the end of a golden string;
> Only wind it into a ball,

It will lead you in at Heaven's gate,
Built in Jerusalem's wall."[7]

His idealizations are the fruits of imagination, which is even more prolific in its moral and religious uses than in those of art and literature. The egotistical abuses of reason are diminished by this consecrated faculty. It furnishes the prophet with those keys to the heavenly mysteries which the priest has so often claimed as his exclusive property.

Some preachers repress the intellectual affinities which imagination imparts, confining themselves to bare allusions and parsimonious references, admiring the prosaic for its own sake, and saying precisely what their hearers expect them to say. Such consistency does not protect the pulpit against monotony, nor attract a large constituency to its commonplace utterances. Preaching without imagination may be compared to an observatory without a telescope, and the preacher to one who watches his own shadow on a wall. Many men misconceive imagination and do not realize that it is a truly creative faculty. They look upon it as a mere ebullience of misdirected emotion and incoherent thought, vague, formless, uncertain, expressive of the credulity of those who revel in the chimerical. I have heard it spoken against as a habit of phantasy, of image-making, akin to looseness of statement and watery rhetoric, given to trailing wreaths of metaphor which smother the message. That imagination can be subjected to serious misuse is undeniable, but it is never in itself a mark of weakness, although it may become a source of weakness when combined with a feeble judgment or a dreamy character. Natively it is a permanent and pronounced element of mental power and of preaching ability.[8] Napoleon, who possessed it to a phenomenal degree, asserted that it ruled the world; and his career demonstrated that an unbridled imagination may be as dangerous as a mettled horse which breaks the rider's neck. If you would insure correct psychological conditions of thinking, and hold its data succinctly before your

[7] *Jerusalem*, p. 98.
[8] Borden P. Bowne: *Psychological Theory*, p. 277.

minds, cultivate the gift and faculty divine which "interprets the little you may know into the vast infinite you may feel," and enables you to sow the seed of the Word, not on the thin soil of the superficial but in the deep loam of the permanent.

The historian is compelled to nurture the power of reproducing personalities and events of the past, in order to present them to the ready recognition of his readers. This is still more obligatory for the preacher because, unlike the historian, he must, as we have said, penetrate the unseen. For the one figures are a luxury, for the other an essential. The prophets of the Eternal have no choice, their message has to be clothed with the draperies of imagination. You are forever putting sacred things together in your thought, continually wondering how the ruling ideas of revelation were evolved, or speculating upon what they may yet be. Your resulting conceptions must be vivid enough to make such a lasting impression upon others that the imagined world into which you translate them may become more thrilling than the real one.

Few things are more fearful in speech than imagination without taste, unless it be imagination without facts. The well-balanced preacher is not suspended between the drooping wings of superfluous and supposititious statements,—an agitation without progress of which no practiced orator would be guilty. His "inner vision is touched into sight by the transforming grace of the All-Seeing Spirit," his flights are steadied by the strong pinions of reason and of faith. His intellectually receptive nature feeds imagination with the truths it translates into the glories and the shadows of the Beyond. Let your quest for such truths be deliberate and conscientious, but do not permit it to interfere with the imaginative presentation of the truth you acquire. Where this disparity between acquirement and presentation occurs, sermons have a jarring note; they do not convey to the hearts of others the verities upon which the preacher's grasp is intellectual rather than imaginative.

Further, so far from being a spontaneous impulse of the

preaching moment, your creative imagination requires long intervals of stilled and musing meditation. It is the "unravished bride of quietness," the "foster-child of silence and slow time." Its processes also entail your self-discovery. Its wise use, which instinctively rejects extravagances and refuses to be severed from its base in reality, is seldom, if ever, found in shallow, acrid or unduly emotional temperaments. It does not thrive in the moisture of irrelevant sentiment nor as the mere factor of embellished fiction. Inflated rhapsodies are foreign to its sway, and whatever relations it holds to art and beauty are subordinated in the consecrated preacher to the sense of the presence of God and all that His presence implies. Its originating qualities go hand in hand with your assimilating powers, and those who mistake intellectual dawdling for thorough-paced reflection will prove the truth of Joubert's saying that "he who has imagination without learning has wings but no feet." It is a safe assumption that the irregularities and infirmities of the preacher's imagination are in closest correspondence with those of his heart and mind, and, conversely, that in its lawful exercise his gifts and virtues are at their best. Hence you have on the one hand the deplorable irreverence, vulgarity and sensationalism which to-day corrupt some schools of preaching; and on the other hand, those high employments of the imagination which detach it from the vagaries of fancy and make the sermons it inspires sources of edification. In nothing is the actual level of the minister's inner life more fully disclosed than in his imaginative faculty. It reveals the highlands and the lowlands of personal character and piety. By its means holy men of old made known not only the will of God but their own character and tendencies. Our Lord took toll of imagination and though as the Supreme Teacher Who was the Truth He taught He knocked at many doors, He chose to enter at "the ivory gate and golden." His parables, which overflow with the heart of the Father, were divine verities embodied in a tale, proving nothing syllogistically, communicating everything necessary. As masterpieces of the message of Jesus they elevate the minds to the

high places where tumult ceases and spiritual perceptions widen. It was of the essence of Christ's nature that He should be the Prince of imagination, and His servants who have fellowship with Him share in some degree the enduements of this august faculty. The preacher who employs an imagination regulated by his communion with God and by the word of the Gospel, is as one whose feet are on the lofty mountains, whose eyes survey the truths that burn like stars above. He becomes aware of latent experiences underlying his immediate experience and identifying themselves with the great past. Thus does this gift wave along the corridors of Time a flaming brand kindled in eternal fires.

You will encounter in the Church individuals who cling to abstractions and are averse to their personification. Rivers of feelings which sometimes rush through the preacher's heart and make his veins tingle are contrary to their habit. They move as the dead among the living, devitalized, vacuous and calm. Utility, technical skill and obvious statements are their academic gods. What has happened because they voyage with the crowd? Children, who should be taught the higher uses of imagination, are left to the tender mercies of the moving-picture theater and the maudlin dramas which bewilder or stain the juvenile mind. Adolescents, who might have received at least inklings of the significance of the greater prophets of the Invisible, tumble about with morbid appetite in crude mixtures of sentimental or materialistic presentations, and feed their idle dreams upon a thousand caricatures that pass for truth. Religionists who practice the old devices which try to twist faith out of moonshine are in part responsible for the prevalent wrong done to imagination, since the demands they make upon it violate reality and good sense.

Manifestly, the preacher who cannot realize for himself the interplay of imaginative forces in the religious education of mankind cannot portray them to others. You must have the ideals which imagination conceives, and endeavor so to adjust its motions that they shall neither warp your subject nor ob-

scure your facts. There is an imminent danger for those who shrink from the severe mental discipline here entailed. The figurative quality of their language plays tricks with their reason. Cherished phrases are converted into a philosophy, and treated as though they were actualities instead of mere attempts to define actualities. Clergymen who chide scientists for this mental misdemeanor are not always free from it themselves. They talk of moral systems and theological covenants as if these were substantial things and not human efforts to describe the eternal ethic between God and man. Even logic, as some one has well said, does not teach us how we ought to think but how we do think; its office being like that of rhetoric, descriptive; the one interprets the process of clear thinking, the other that of clear expression. Imagination weaves its own robes, suiting their texture and sheen to the matter in hand and showing that concise and vigorous reflection can usually be communicated in appropriate and impressive phrases.

Take care that the temper of your imagination does not become excessively somber nor yet unduly optimistic. These dispositions have their seasonable qualities and occasionally serve preaching, but they do not light the fires of another Pentecost in the heart of the preacher. The melancholy pulpiteer takes his theology from Ecclesiastes instead of the Gospel. He regards the life that now is as vanity and rattles its skeleton before every congregation, a procedure tantamount to an impeachment of the government of Him Who is the present as well as the future Ruler of the universe. His opposite is the exuberant brother who seems incapable of perceiving the insolence of ill-founded hopes. There is no solicitude so instructive as the solicitude for others. The development of your pastoral sympathies which are in many ways akin to those of parentage will safeguard you from these extremes and enable you to adjust your uses of imagination to the inherent contradictions present in human situations. Its merits are mainly aggressive: it is more upon the offensive than the defensive. It releases you from the thrall of nar-

row realities and affords you the richest joys of your vocation. Seek it therefore in all else you seek; in general culture, in contact with those who have evinced it in their deeds and writings, and in the devout attitudes of the soul which keep its tideways deepened for the inflow of the Eternal Spirit.

So much for imagination in your preparation of pulpit discourse, looking with eager and attentive eyes into the very heart of it and at its height and depth and the horizons melting into its broad expanse. Turn now to the style of the sermon, whether spoken or written, with which imagination is so intimately associated. It is impossible to discuss here all the kinds of public utterance; they are as diversified as the characters of men and women, and not a few are nondescript. You have the style orotund, the attenuated, the bland, the denunciatory, the theatrical, the insipid, the inane, the elementary and many others. The preacher who cannot mention the simplest thing without euphemism is cheek-by-jowl with the one who cannot speak of the grace of God without the most trite and banal allusions. Of course we wish to possess the style that reveals us,

> "Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,
> The love of love,"

and brings before our audiences whatever deserves their worship and determines their conduct. Perhaps an opening can be made toward the ends desired by reminding you that the foundation of such expression is sincerity, and that this virtue makes style a part of the man. His whole nature gives him his style, and nothing else will give it. Preachers who endeavor to say more than they know or to simulate what they do not feel tear to tatters the robes of reality. It may well be that your imagination does not always imply in you the power to convey in commensurate speech what you have in mind. In that case fall back upon the neglected art of unadorned statement, and you will discover that the greatest truths enter the soul's audience chamber by the royal way reserved for them. The conviction that their inherent gran-

deur is behind what you do say assures effectiveness and imparts an impetus which ornate declamation cannot impart. Never attempt to describe the indescribable nor to force your gifts into false positions from which they have to retreat discomfited. Some oratorical preachers leave nothing for the Day of Judgment, and the listener who complained that a lurid long-drawn-out word picture of the great fire at Chicago was worse than the conflagration itself had justification for his comment.

Study the noblest exemplars of eloquence, who generally held in reserve forces they did not marshal, which were for them what the Old Guard was for Napoleon; they impress the reader with a sense of further authority to be invoked should the necessity arise. John Bright towered over what he said as do the hills over the rivers which flow from their slopes, and never spoke beyond his strength. However arresting his exordium, convincing his argument, unsparing his invective or moving his exhortation, the entranced audience knew that behind the almost flawless array of a speech "terrible as an army with banners" were other thoughts and phrases not yet called into action. Avoid, as he did, superfluous ornamentation which deprives preaching of color, music, strength and movement and makes it trail along ridiculously like a bedizened woman whose dress calls attention to its loss of comeliness by reason of its vulgar ostentation. Be first concerned with what you have to say, rather than with your manner of saying it.

Another principle of good style which scarcely needs mention is the purity of the language it employs. Keep a good dictionary at your elbow and allow no word or phrase to find a place in your compositions that does not fit the purpose nor maintain the best traditions of public address. That matchless instrument which famous individuals of every civilized nation have praised unsparingly, undefiled English, was never more exposed than now to pollution by its own inheritors. Its genius has nourished our race and other races in law, literature, art and religion; yet vulgarisms of every sort and

dialectical jargons of numerous circles threaten the virginity of the mother tongue. It is your obligation to preserve in the pulpit the form of sound words. There is no emotion, no sentiment, no phase of thought that cannot be better embodied in correct speech than in terms which savor of the appalling intellectual poverty or of the cheap and shabby cleverness which are the progenitors of slang. In this connection I quote from Milton, whom Viscount Morley magnifies as the greatest master of mighty and beautiful speech: "Nor is it to be considered of small consequence what language, pure or corrupt, a people has, or what is their customary degree of propriety in speaking it. . . . For, let the words of a country be in part unhandsome and offensive in themselves, in part debased by wear and wrongly uttered, and what do they declare, but, by no light indication, that the inhabitants of that country are an indolent, idly-yawning race, with minds already long prepared for any amount of servility? On the other hand, we have never heard that any empire, any state, did not at least flourish in a middling degree as long as its own liking and care for its language lasted."[9]

Style is seldom appropriate unless it is plain and unmistakable. Few preachers can bend Ulysses' bow or venture upon the refinements and discriminations that enhance the pages of a classic author but would only embarrass you in the spoken word. There are stylists who push beyond the muddy waters of conventional utterance into the blue or golden seas of language, where they have fared forth confidently, perfect mariners all. But how often we have to view them from some lattice opening on their navigation and wonder how they attained their magical qualities. These qualities are, as a rule, native gifts which have come to their own through ceaseless training and repeated effort. Certainly no preacher will sail without disaster the seas which a few elect spirits control until he has learned simplicity, the fundamental element of good expression. Style must also appeal to the senses and find room

[9] Letter to Bonmattei, quoted by Viscount Morley: *Studies in Literature*, p. 224.

for those images of loveliness and strength which follow in the train of the sermon as it cleaves its way to the marrow of the theme.

Further, without vibrant passion speech is dead. Yet passion does not, as some suppose, forbid you to reason nor militate against patience, equanimity, or the fair treatment of hostile opinions, nor is it to be confused with the oracular arrogance that excites contempt, nor with the superfluous epithets that relieve the speaker but burden the hearer. Quite otherwise, the passionate preacher often compresses into one phrase a torrential flow of thought or feeling, and rises to his climax in the consciousness that he has previously satisfied the ethic of his subject. Thus he gives additional value and wider currency to his views, while his adherence to fact and argument is the real source of his earnestness.

The worst result of a bad style is that it does injustice to truth, reminding one of a miscreant who hacks in pieces a prime work of art. Avoid the malpractice of artificial types of utterance, which have been satirized as toilettes performed from folly or vanity suggestive of the stiffness of Mrs. Jarley's wax-work figures. A near relative of the artificial is the imitative style, which generally ends in reproducing the faults rather than the excellences of its model. Dr. Holmes sadly observed that one who talked like Emerson or Carlyle soon found himself surrounded by a crowd of walking phonographs, who mechanically reëchoed his mental and oral accents. There has been hardly a preacher of renown who was not encircled by a crowd of adulatory brethren, waiting not only for his word but for his gestures, or even for his least admirable peculiarities. To copy these was their obsession, but what informed auditors thought about the belittling process is altogether another matter. Imitation reduces selfhood and sterilizes originality. No preacher will reach his natural dimensions who is a parasite slavishly fastened upon his paragon. For this reason throw off any human influence that may have become monopolistic, and while you learn of gifted men remain severely yourself, expressing that self in the sermon.

The imitative style is seldom without its ridiculous side, and so humor helps to ameliorate the mischief, but in every case the preacher is mulcted.

The prolix style frequently arises from what seems to be an incurable loquacity, sometimes from sheer mental laziness. Its remedy consists in writing what you propose to say and then striking out with relentless hand everything which is not pertinent. By this method a sermon that might have taken an hour to deliver can be better presented in twenty minutes. Its meaning will stand out the more clearly when the cumbersome robes of rhetoric have been removed. Platitudes are not transformed into profundities by a multitude of words, and conciseness is always a virtue of speech. Nevertheless, the preacher should not become so finical in this respect as to leave gaps in his discourse or incoherencies in its arrangement. It is often better to hint than to elaborate, to suggest rather than to amplify, but there are sacred themes in which enlargement and repetition are not only permissible but necessary.

Do not shrink from mingling the sublimity of your themes with familiar allusions and references, for the homely and the concrete relieve the heroic strain of the sermon. A resourceful preacher descends without hazard from the most exalted to the humblest scenes of life. He blends heaven with earth, and uses the holiest truths to inculcate the lowliest duties; seemingly trivial metaphors unveil a world of significance to him. Bunyan is perhaps the most striking example, outside the Bible, of this versatility. He abounds in body without inflation, and his simple luminous sentences are models that cannot be improved upon. Although he had received no sort of academic training, his equal in clarity, brevity, felicity and wealth of expression would be hard to find. He contrived to attain a literary technique such as few men in any age have had. His unerring instinct for dramatic situations and telling phrases, combined with the splendor of his imagination, kept him altogether free from the heaviness and tumidity which mar so much devotional literature. Everything in his

writings is warm, living, terse, ever and anon intense, yet never beyond the strict economy of emotion for practical aims. This Puritan peasant of the shires devoted an imperial intellect to evangelical themes and dreamt them into a realm of power no other author of his time, except Milton, approached. The pompous magnificence of the able and learned divines of Bunyan's day is unendurable when compared with his vital prose. Although he set down nothing which could not be relished by the rustics of his native heath, what he wrote and said still lingers in the spiritual imagination of English-speaking Protestants throughout the world. Does any author accessible to you know as this converted tinker knew what a human being can bear of temptation or achieve of virtue in the never-ending pressure of the life around him? what powers of resistance are in his soul? how long the religious energies he has accumulated will continue to spurn the seductions of evil and respond to the overtures of goodness? If not, ponder again and again the characteristics of the allegorist who showed his genius in such numerous ways, but in none more consummately than in that discipline of omission which kept a tropical imagination submissive to a stern theology.

The young preacher can second his study of Bunyan by that of Lincoln, who was very much in statesmanship what Bunyan was in religion, the prophet dwelling in an Interpreter's House which humanity at large has been glad to visit. No man of the nineteenth century could state a proposition with more clearness and compactness or build up an irrefutable argument with more consistency than could the victor-victim of modern democracy. His apt comparisons, inimitable wit, fundamental reasoning, logical precision, benevolence of spirit and ethical supremacy were beyond the remarkable—they were phenomenal. His principal books were the Holy Scriptures and Shakespeare; they gave him a culture unsurpassed by that of the classics and verified the assertion of Huxley that an English-speaking man who cannot get his literary style out of the sources to which Lincoln resorted is not likely to obtain it from Homer and Sophocles.

I am sure that you desire to cultivate a good style and are prepared to adopt the means required for so necessary an acquisition. This desire, however, occasionally lures the beginner from naturalness of expression into turgid and redundant phrases which defeat his aim. He does not look at things exactly with his own eyes and fails to harmonize the eloquent voices to which he has listened too eagerly for his own self-control. Guard against this tendency by selecting high and noble themes which involve the profoundest feelings and the widest interests of humanity, and remember that the rhetoric you use should be dictated by principles, not by men. Such themes will either find a way or make one, and their exalted nature often imparts itself to their expression. But that this may be worthy and adequate, note every happy distinction or conspicuous sentence you meet in your reading of the best works. These add pregnancy, suggestiveness and cadence to your utterance and give you not only the command of words but the command of right words. One is somewhat averse to a manufactured style; yet Robert Louis Stevenson confessed that he had played the "sedulous ape" to Hazlitt, Lamb, Wordsworth, Sir Thomas Browne, Defoe and a dozen other authorities of equal rank, and insisted that "like it or not, this is the way to write." I cannot entirely endorse Stevenson's method, but the preacher does gain sway over his audience if his mode of speech has been chastened by his acquaintance with the masters of expression. It is his to see that doctrine transforms life, that theology becomes a constructive force in character, that conscience does not slumber in the embrace of error; and in the great enterprise every ally that enables him to reach the end of the sermon with a surplus of power should be gratefully welcomed. The last remark brings us to catholicity of taste. The friends of the golden tongue are very many, and it is not wise to turn your back on any one of them. You will be assured that this particular style or the other has expired or is out of date or is offensive. One expert declaims against "Johnsonese"; another favors an exaggerated simplicity, which in fact is not so simple as it is

studied and strained. The art of ruling the minds of men and women through public speech is too arduous and insistent to permit you to discard any style that is legitimate. Monotony and conventionality are your dread foes: keep them at bay by the variety and freshness of your address. Mr. Gladstone was the last survivor of the band of statesmen who employed the grand manner, adapted to a critical audience and embellished by quotations from the classics. His successors have discredited that manner, though they have scarcely improved upon the lead that Gladstone gave to representative democracy. This is the hey-day of the conversational style. Sublime words and sonorous antitheses are no longer honored guests but intruders. Nevertheless, the conversational method is not the all of pulpit presentation, which is summoned to the description of supernal realities. There are climaxes in the Evangel of God which require not a thin meager piping but a balanced, symphonic outflow of chosen language. Lord Chesterfield's description of the English Pericles, the elder Pitt, bears on this point: "His eloquence was of every kind, and he excelled in the argumentative as in the declamatory style." Provided you sustain what you say and keep it moving toward its goal by the pervasive strength of your personality, you need not be afraid of any form of utterance, which is aglow with feeling and informed by reason. Styles of preaching should be mobilized in Beecher's way; he never hesitated to combine half a dozen in a single discourse, and thus kept his hearers expectant and receptive.

I assume that you will write what you afterwards preach, especially during your earlier period. Quintilian, Cicero and the younger Pliny translated by way of improving their style; so did Voltaire, Dryden, Chapman and D'Alembert. Wilhelm Schlegel revolutionized the German drama when in 1797 he handed his translation of *Romeo and Juliet* to the director of the Royal Theater in Berlin. Translations of the Bible have rejuvenated the languages in which they were made. If you should put your knowledge of the sacred languages to similar use it would be highly beneficial. In any case habitual

writing saves you from the mistiness which mothers bewilderment and accentuates the difference between the written and the spoken word. Test this by penning a series of propositions which have strict sequence and hold it in terms that do not overlap. The method may seem easy to a novice, but to one who has repeatedly to write and correct sermons or articles the discipline is as obvious as are its advantages. Further, it proves that selection is the essence of preparation. Trying to get everything into the picture crowds out the impression desired; in oratory, as in art, the master is revealed by his omissions. That is the best style for you which establishes and maintains immediate connection between yourself and the audience. Even a trace of humor here and there is not to be scouted, although it should be introduced very sparingly and only after an extended experience in preaching.

Demosthenes rightly regarded delivery as of the utmost importance, and modern orators who know their business lay equal emphasis upon it. The prepared discourse may be likened to an orchestral score; its adequate delivery to the interpretation of that score by skilled musicians. How many splendid overtures have been marred by incompetent orchestras! how many noble sermons have been ruined by a wretched delivery! The curate's simper, the ecclesiastic's monotone, the parson's whining affectations have been the butt of every stage jester and of the censors of our calling. Such portrayals are often unjust, but they originate in the regrettable fact that good speaking is all too rare in the pulpit. Not a few gifted and godly men have been confined all their days to a restricted ministry solely because they did not know how to comport themselves in matters relative to voice, demeanor, gesture and general bearing. Hence they have stood still while brethren of lesser parts have ascended to wider circles of influence. Whitefield was altogether inferior to John Foster in intellect and culture, but Whitefield attained dominion over two continents while Foster scattered diamonds of thought over half-empty pews. Whitefield was opulent in the ways and means of popular expression; Foster had little to

draw with, and the well was deep. The best homily ever written remains a thing unborn until it is preached, and a bad delivery mutilates it in the process of birth. People cannot be persuaded to attend upon the massacre of the innocents every Lord's Day. A crowded church may not be a testimony of a soul-searching minister, but an empty church is an indubitable sign of some weakness in the pulpit.

I need not repeat what has already been said about the personality of the preacher, but you can be certain that it is the fountain of his delivery, and in the long run tells rather than the sermon. When Thomas Binney appeared in the pulpit he looked and acted like a god. Archbishop Temple gave the Apostolic benediction to a congregation as though he were blessing a nation. Hugh Rose read the Ten Commandments in a rural church on a rainy day with such dignity of articulation that a critical listener said Rose seemed to have received them that morning from Sinai itself. They left his lips stamped with his individuality, and everything requisite for their deliverance was harmoniously employed. When you have learned his secret you have overcome the initial difficulty of preaching. The pulpit formerly possessed a large proportion of divines who had not only much that was worth saying, but could say it in a worthy manner, so that the people were compelled to heed and believe their message. To-day we turn out educated theologians and scholars versed in varied learning, but do they have the resources of the pulpit speaker or are they as helpless in presence of a congregation as a historian in presence of an invading army? When Matthew Arnold lectured in Chicago, some daring reporter described him as resembling an elderly bird perched on a trellis and pecking at a grape vine, and General Grant remarked to his wife that he had seen but could not hear the distinguished visitor. It should be added that Arnold was sensible enough to consult an elocutionist, and to such good purpose that before he left the United States he spoke audibly and well. You will be made aware of your defects in delivery by practice. And if you have to repair them by the aid of an elocutionist, see

to it that he does not leave you with other defects almost as objectionable as those of which he rids you. It does not become me to lay down rules for your observance. These you will doubtless receive from the more competent guidance of your professors. My one aim is to emphasize the necessity of a good delivery, for lack of which the wealth of many a preacher's mind runs to waste or reacts within him as a pent-up Utica, conscious of a prophet's heart and also of a prophet's disappointment. A solemn obligation is laid upon you, from which none has dispensation, to proclaim as well as know the Gospel, and he who falters here when he might have succeeded is answerable for his dereliction. All that has been said can be summarized in another quotation from Milton, more applicable to the preacher than even to the poet. "I was confirmed in this opinion, that he who would not be frustrated of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable things ought himself to be a true poem . . . not presuming to sing high praises of heroic men or famous cities, unless he have in himself the experience and practice of all that is praiseworthy." [10]

The importance of your bodily equipment is not exactly germane here; and, indeed, I am not sure that there is much use in talking upon the subject to young men who are, as a rule, already inclined toward athletics. Besides, we never quite believe that the requirements of Nature are inexorable, till she exacts the penalty due to their neglect. The laws of hygienics are no longer violated because of ignorance, and if after you are forty you have to live under a lowering sky of ill health and do your work with a rebellious pulse or reluctant breathing, probably you will have no one to blame but yourselves. I prefer to believe that you will add a vigilant supervision to what Nature has already done for you in respect to physical fitness. A passing reference to some other external matters which are, strictly speaking, within the provinces of the elocutionist and the rhetorician is more seasonable. Not every minister rejoices in a full and pleasing voice, with musical range and inflection. If you are fortunate enough to

[10] Quoted by Marcus Dods: *Erasmus and Other Essays*, p. 320.

own such an instrument, carefully preserve it; if it is not yours, cultivate what voice you have, but subordinate vocal acquirements to that which you have to say, or you may be under the soft impeachment of making tone and accent do duty for thought. I recall a few divines who talked with the stately resonance of an empty cistern, and uttered commonplaces with a majestic note. Mobile features, lively and expressive in their play, radiating the effulgence of true emotion; easy and natural gestures; and an erect and graceful bearing add much to the effect of fitly chosen words. Covet these accessories, though they are not so essential as some would have you believe. In conclusion, when your gift of utterance, be it ordinary or unusual, is supported by prolonged meditation, lucid thinking, orderly arrangement; guarded by an instinctive sense of fitness, and animated by an intense desire that sacred truth shall prevail, the results will be commensurately effective. These qualities are not only primal incentives of the sermon but of every form of ethical discourse, and have an indisputable ascendancy in art, letters, politics, and throughout the moral realm. There is a threefold eloquence bound up in your vocation; the eloquence of words, of deeds and of imperishable principles, the last two being incomparably the most convincing. You may find yourself at the first deficient in readiness of speech, in rhythmic phrase and haunting allusion. But the difficulties this lack creates can be largely overcome by educative methods, and in the meantime you can admirably second what you have to say by the life that embodies your vows to the truth as you understand it.

CHAPTER IX

PREACHING AND WORSHIP

"I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory."

Isaiah vi: 1–3.

CHAPTER IX

PREACHING AND WORSHIP

The place of worship—The Eucharist in worship—Worship as revelatory—The Mediator of worship—Unifying power of worship—False substitutes—Inadequate rituals—Three memorable services—Pastoral prayer—Praise in worship—Order of service—Need of reform in worship—Reading the lessons—The worshiping Church.

It is quite possible that the Church is on the eve of a spiritual upheaval in which her restorative epochs may repeat themselves by means of a fresh discovery of God's saving strength. But she will first have to become in a greatly intensified degree the worshiping as well as the witnessing Church, and wait until she is endued anew with power. The sympathetic conditions which a religious revival presupposes, in which it originates, by which its results are conserved, are created by the devotional breathings of God's saints. All successful propaganda is preceded by the divine and human fellowship in which the compassionate infinitudes of the Gospel are reconceived in order that they may be recommunicated. As men of Puritan lineage you have heard much of the lofty spirits who were solitary in their intercourse with Heaven. But the promise of the Risen Lord that He would be in the midst of His people was made not to the individual but to the twos and threes. However serviceable the watchman may be who keeps his solitary vigil, his usefulness will be definitely curtailed if he should become the recluse who has every virtue except that of association. Good men for whom every outward union provokes inward dissent, who cannot fall into line with their brethren on any occasion, who covet seclusion and speak slightingly of those who obey the social impulse, may

find a circumscribed paradise in their habitual reserve, but their merits are largely lost upon their contemporaries. For our generation feels as no generation has felt since the Middle Ages the exhilaration of communal fellowship. Your future parishioners will work and play as they warred, in large groups, and when they do worship it will be in similar alignments. One does not have to admit that *esprit de corps* is an unmitigated advantage, but it cannot be denied that it counts for a great deal in labor, capital, trade, politics and the spiritual activities of the nations. More than ever people think and act in corporate ways, and it is the problem of the Church as the living bridge between the seen and the unseen to arouse in them those larger, nobler ideals of worship which center the social imagination upon eternal realities. This was done in the Middle Ages, when the effect of such ideals was profound and formative, dissipating the widespread gloom and relieving the acute destitution then prevalent. Poets and artists depicted the enraptured hosts upon the hills of light as well as the horror-stricken hordes in the abysses of perdition. A recent writer has referred to the individual of those days who, subjected to cruelty and violence, lived hazardously and coarsely upon earth and shrank before the final ordeal of death, which he must face alone. But the symbolism and teaching of the Church assured him that he would be finally admitted to a seraphic concourse and an ecstasy of joy. No matter how God might order his existence after death his spirit would surely be filled with sweet peace and love of the Divine Will. Gothic architecture, ornate ceremonialism, direct access through a priesthood to the loved ones who had preceded him into the Beyond, were purposely employed to ensphere the eternal in the temporal, to make it real, vivid and dominant. We do not have to go so far back as mediævalism for these ostensible benefits. Earlier Methodism also aroused in its converts a joyous anticipation of the soul's enfranchisement through bodily dissolution, and many of its marvels among the moral outcasts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were wrought by its worship, chiefly as expressed in the hymns of

Charles Wesley. This psalmist of the Church Universal excelled in the portrayal of the personal experience of believers, and was seldom more inspired than when he sang of the bliss of the saints who rest from their labors. The lessons derived from these historic instances, which could be indefinitely multiplied, teach us that, until Christianity ceases to define the entire realm of eternal values in which the soul realizes its life in God and its relations to the redeemed Societies of Heaven and of earth, it will never fail to stress the fellowship created by worship.

In that fellowship is the union of private and public religious observances for the edification of the Church and the salvation of the world. The general work of the Gospel, in the preparation of the soil of the heart for the sowing of the seed of divine truth and the production of the fruits of truth in godly living, depends upon the pure and sincere worship which is the loftiest employment of human spirits. To bless the ineffable Name of their Maker and Lover, to confess their sins and implore His mercy, are primal duties and privileges which constitute the holiest functions of the Church. The greatness of her worship largely determines the strength of her ministerial position and materially aids the extent of her influence upon the religious conduct of mankind. If those to whom you proclaim your message were a perfect organ for its transmission, possibly worship and preaching might be regarded separately, but this is seldom the case. The average congregation represents both diversity and oneness, and the oneness is more likely to be perfected not by what you say but by what all alike adore. Some men and women are over-ridden by temperamental differences; others are disinclined toward the mysteries of the Faith; a third class looks upon spiritual thoughts as the shadows cast by feeling; and here and there the supercilious or the skeptical are unaware that the soul's intuitions are often wiser than its earthly knowledge. The reconciliation of these differences is not solely in your utterances, as too many preachers suppose. For it is far easier to energize the varieties of the human mind through ar-

gument and eloquence than it is to merge them in adoration of the Eternal Father. Worship begins with the consecrated few who have previously ordered themselves aright before the Eternal Presence, and they await your coming to the pulpit with an eager expectation which supports your message. But every divisive element has to be eliminated, and the audience blended in one heart and mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel. This is a supernal task, and for its fulfilment ministers should seek the help of the Spirit of God, Who governs all devout devices and desires, prayers and meditations for His own acceptance. Under His guidance neither inferior motives nor the artificial distinctions to which they give rise can mar the beauty of holiness that should adorn every aspiration and act of the worshiping Church.

The summit of worship is reached in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, in which Christ Himself invites His disciples to partake of the visible symbols of His redeeming love and to rest in His providential care. In spite of appearances to the contrary, there is a widespread heart-hunger for fellowship with the Divine Redeemer and with the brotherhood through the Eucharist. Many who might well be supposed to have sufficient religious resources within themselves, and still more who seem to be far removed from other presentations of the Gospel, are drawn to the Holy Table and find there the blessings conferred upon a passive and recipient trust. Churches which elevate the devotion that centers in the Lord's Supper have less reason to complain of public indifference than those which rely too exclusively upon the attraction of the pulpit. Twenty years since, the flock I am permitted to pastor entered upon a fresh realization of this fact. Without the too frequent celebrations which tend to breed an undue familiarity inimical to the healthiest traditions of the rite; in the restraint yet also the freedom of our Protestant faith, we have endeavored to make the bi-monthly Communion Service the culmination of our devotion. It has become the most influential means of grace we enjoy, and its observance on Good Friday

is the surpassing event of our organization as a part of the priesthood in the Body of which Christ is the Head.[1]

Further, Christian worship is a revelatory medium to which reason testifies. It may be questioned in this connection whether the gift of prophecy is more frequently imparted to divines who have drained the lees of the wine of learning than to the simpler, spiritualized preachers who are even more mighty in prayer than in sermonic utterance. Savonarola was not distinguished for a highly cultivated intellect, but what education he had did not blunt his finer perceptive faculties. There are ambassadors who, like him, echo in their devotional speech the accents of the Eternal Voice; whose ministrations unveil the mysteries of the Unseen. It is also indisputable that worship has been the animating life of man's artistic pursuits and moral gains, nor could it have kept its priority in every age and among all races had it not been man's most rational service. Where its purer forms prevailed civilization attained its height. Christian Rome, the Europe of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Puritan England and Colonial New England, stamped their impress upon the fabric of surrounding States because worshiping men and women made a lasting consecration of human life to its Creator. One can trace beneath the oppression of erroneous systems the ceaseless quest of men for the true and living God. Their waste and folly, their superstitious wanderings, their erection of altars in forbidden shrines, their kindling of strange fires, could not prevent that quest. Its secret restlessness was instilled not only by reason but by the highest reason. Gibbon in his account of the destruction of the Persian monarchy by the Saracens relates that among the standards captured at the battle of Cadesia was the leathern apron of a blacksmith who had once led the armies of his country in war. This primitive ensign was so encrusted with votive offerings as to be hidden beneath them. In like manner the original ideals of worship have been overlaid by traditions which conceal their

[1] Cf. Chapter IV for a fuller reference to the Sacraments.

former psychological importance. These we properly repudiate, but in doing so let us see to it that our barer rituals find sufficient scope for the spirit of worship.

The truth Christ made known is continuously realized afresh in worship, which releases and illuminates the mind for the conquests of Christian thought. Believing not only that God is, but that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, the Church and, in its crucial hours, the world have a sufficient motive for approach to Him. How often we speak of existence in terms of certitude; it, at least, we say, is real; yet it is neither more real nor more persistent than is the life of prayer. Live constantly in that life, as Jesus commanded, and your intellectual nature will be upraised and revivified. The servants of God who have met the actual needs of their age have dwelt with God. Worship enabled them to dream the humanly impossible, while from the insight and resolution their dreams afforded they established righteousness and built the avenues in which redemption makes progress. The contributions made by Christian worship to theology, philosophy, discourse, art, music and poetry demonstrate its essential reasonableness, and so far from requiring defense are to be lauded as evidences of what the human mind can accomplish when expanded and sublimated by the Divine Mind.

Worship also reveals religious realities beyond the reach of unaided reason. There is no purely intellectual solution for numerous difficulties that trouble thought and life. In the treatment of these difficulties the learning of the sage is impotent until it is informed by the experience of the saint. Hence it is that often the best sermons only play around great and mysterious truths which through worship are made real to the soul; then the clouds disperse, the shadows fly and the Invisible is revealed. It is safe to assert that what the preacher deeply venerates he will best proclaim. The worship faith inspires and the faith worship clarifies are reciprocal in a true theology and a proficient ambassadorship. The authority of the Gospel owes much to argument and exploitation. But these mainly concern its outworks; its citadel consists in

the communion of those who have sat, like Mary, rapt and blessed at the Master's feet. Seen by the sinful as He is, if goodness does not draw them, weariness and sorrow often drive them to His pardon and peace; seen by the saintly, their righteousness fades in the radiance of a holiness they crave for themselves; seen by you before you venture again upon the errands of the Cross, the vision is reflected upon those to whom you minister. In worship the lives of countless companies of an otherwise obscure caste are transformed, and become wonderful examples of high spiritual existence. They breathe in the sanctuary their native air; the Gospel has a vital interest for them, they are encompassed by unseen presences, by the angels who are about the throne and the spirits of the just made perfect. To think soberly and discreetly upon heavenly things and to feel the awe they generate is to bring all your gifts of good sense, culture and insight to a common center around which they revolve in your utterance. No one can be constantly employed in religious work without realizing that it culminates in an absorbing devotion. The paramount interest of worship is the endless lesson the preacher must ever be learning; for which the longest life is too brief, and all we can do on earth is to approximate to the ideal worship of the Church Triumphant. The maxim of John Smith, the Cambridge Platonist, that "such as men themselves are, such will God appear to them to be," is nowhere more applicable than in their adorations. For the pure in heart a true worship confirms belief, matures character, replenishes virtuous tendencies and discloses the inheritance of the saints. It is an equally admissible deduction from Smith's maxim that the tributes of false worship work mischief. And one of the saddest signs of our day is its prostitution of this divine office to those cheap objectives of perverted will or vain imagination, which engross attention by catering to the instinct for the unknown and the eternal in degenerate ways. Despite all they claim, there is no paradise possible to man except through conquered sin.

The love that is sacrificial, the devout fear that does not

bind the heart, the gratitude evoked by the thought of God's goodness, the penitence that mourns for offenses committed against that goodness, the faith that relies on the promises of divine grace, all are elements of Christian worship, which must be deeply pervaded by the essential virtue of reverence, that restraining and mellowing force of a religion intrinsically revolutionary in its relations with God. Study the history of man's spiritual development and you will perceive that without reverence worship withers, religion dwindles, blatant emotionalism supplants ethical integrity, and the veil which the profane contend cannot be pierced appears impenetrable. What is the minister apart from the Presence which reverence enthrones, or the congregation in which it does not prescribe every attitude and method? As well think of a Heaven left lonely of a God! This hits the spiritual dearth in which irreverence thrives, and against which an effectual worship protests.

There is difference of opinion about the ultimate law of worship, but for believers who have known the Priesthood of Christ there can scarcely be any question concerning His mediation in their intercourse with the Father. Some more frigid spirits assert their independence of Him as their Daysman and tell us that they pray without a sense of His intercession for them. So long as people really pray to God one is not disposed to quarrel with the particular course their petitions take, for there is an instinctive discernment of His infinitude and man's finiteness which is one of the sources of spiritual wisdom, and it cannot be altogether thwarted by outward circumstances or inward misunderstandings. But for those who inwardly experience the life of Christ, He is forever the way to the Father and the true light of the world's worship. Compassionate and companionable, divine and human, He suffuses with every act of devotion the peculiar intimacy which is never guilty of presumption, the consciousness of friendship with God which ever remembers His holiness and bows down before Him. Our unaided prayers are sometimes no better than cryings in the night, but when they orig-

inate in fellowship with Christ they accord with the will of the Father and prevail. To Christian faith Jesus is the Divine Mediator of worship, and the testimony of saints ascribes its greatest values directly to Him. Some occasionally identify the Son with the Father, an error which can be gently corrected in the interest of devotional propriety, and is at times too severely rebuked by the stiff specialism of those who are disposed to minify the Incarnation. The human soul flies to Jesus because it finds the fulness of the Divine Nature focalized in His Person, to which it attaches its helplessness and its hope. Through His mediation in worship the narrower frontiers of life have been pushed back and the God in Christ, otherwise unknown to men, has been revealed.

Again, there is a unifying force in Christian worship as the sustenance of Christian sentiment, to which the faithful in all branches of the Church, and poets, musicians and philosophers have variously contributed, thereby destroying spurious systems and expelling the unworthy by means of the noble in devotion. Thus social worship has been wedded to the Being of God for the propagation of His holiness and love in men's motives, words and deeds. It has protected society against dissolution and forced upon its institutions the acknowledgment of a judgment to come. It still purifies the lives of myriads of our kind, who live to exalt the Blessed One and to submit themselves to His will. It enables civilized commonwealths to carry on their governments, to make just laws, to remove selfish barriers, to build the Church into the whole human fabric. Kant asserted that morality in action could be universalized, which may be restated by saying that the principle of fellowship can be made supreme and the relations of the *Ego* and the *Alter* adjusted by its supremacy. Who does not wish that this may be, that the love which binds men to God and the child to the parent may overleap all boundaries and prevent the race from further splitting into militant fragments and lapsing into pagan theories of patriotism? When the chasm between self and others has been closed, separative and hostile tendencies will also disappear. The mu-

tual interchange of thought, feeling and will, eventuating in a verified oneness, is the desideratum of society at this hour. If the Church is to sustain her cause she will have to seek such a unity, and she will find it in a common worship rather than in a common theology. She is the depositary of the historical processes of worship instrumental in the welding of different races; processes guarded by the genius of the religion of Jesus and maintained in one succession for two thousand years. They environ her and her children as light encompasses the earth and, like it, give her message vitality and power.

Think of the wider intimations of these processes in such poets as Wordsworth and Milton. The former speaks of voices from beyond, not auditions in the physical sphere but spiritual whisperings that stir the soul and give it answers of recognized intelligence from another land. Milton, who is more to our purpose, loved to walk beneath the "high embowed roof" of some ancient fane and listen to the minstrelsies which dissolved him into ecstasies and brought all Heaven before his eyes. There is no need to amplify; rather should we ask ourselves if the cultured and comprehensive Protestantism of which Milton's religious lyrics were typical can be restored in its worship? The schisms and persecutions that have disrupted catholicity make us impatient of traditional symbolisms. Yet have we not lost as well as gained in the long interim between Milton and contemporary poets? Think of the intellectual splendor he gave to all he touched relative to worship, and contrast his treatment with the current efforts of some churches to organize the human emotions for spiritual ends in revivalism. It is not a cheerful review for our time, whatever it may be for his. They are to be pitied, if not condemned, who content themselves with the ignorant and the puerile in their approach to God, and excuse its frequent effronteries in the name of Protestant freedom. Too often stereotyped observances faintly conceived and feebly presented are the utterly insufficient substitutes for those swelling tides of praise and supplication in the Church which uplift her to a new state of being. You should not endeavor to

stimulate devout sentiment solely by æsthetic appeals, yet if you did, there would be less of menace in that than there is in the slipshod or sensational performances which degrade the functions of worship. Howbeit these evils which destroy the very essentials of a sacrificial worship are not done away with by denunciation. They abound in insulated primitivism because there has been no deliberate and systematic culture of the devout and reverent spirit which created the Te Deums and litanies of the past. The far-reaching implications of that culture are ignored by those who profess to find everything worship requires in whatever is recent. But why should you not once in a while take a lingering retrospect of the world of the Holy Grail, of the cathedrals, of chivalry, of the Crusaders and the Pilgrimages, and ask how it came to be what it was in the existence not only of the Church but of the nations. The pages of books like *The Cloister and the Hearth* or Henry Adams' *Mont Saint-Michel and Chartres* portray a time when men sang at their labor and saw the glory of the Lord in the humblest vocations. Though their characteristic achievements may be beyond our reproductive ability, their shortcomings are usually the objects of our criticism. But are we capturing the age we know as they captured their rude and brutal era, or are we so poor in inward grace and visible means as to deprive devotion of its best accessories? Our aversions are perishable, but the humanities live forever, and they live at their height when employed in worship.

You also face the fact that the rituals found in our churches are not suited to the situation already described. They are monotonous, have too little freedom in experiment and exhibit an excessive tenderness for what were once flexible but are now ossified customs. There is as much peril in a Puritanism too proudly reminiscent of rigid practice as there is in an overweening sacerdotalism. The plea that we should turn a deaf ear to the demand for a more elaborate worship because it precludes a prophetic pulpit is not necessarily valid, and if it were, the unchurched multitudes might nevertheless prefer that sort of worship. But there is no necessity to sacrifice

either to the other, since St. Paul's determination to be all things unto all men if by any means he might save some is eminently applicable here. It would have seemed impossible to Scott's contemporaries that his novels should decline in popularity; yet this is precisely what has occurred, because people have their recurrent moods in work, recreation and worship. All this time, however, they are growing, and the voices bidding them bethink themselves, which the pessimistic preacher thinks are drowned in the gaiety of the throng, are heard in the heart and are not heard in vain. But men will not obey the Spirit's promptings in our prescribed modes. The doleful ones, who before the war mourned the lack of cohesive discipline and erected monuments to a vanished obedience, simply sought the living among the dead. The conflict gave the lie to their lamentations, and it showed that men and women are still capable of steady and united action. Could a similarly organized energy be at the disposal of the Church and her worship, what is there she could not do for Christ? Do not believe but that it can be hers, if she will heed the admonitions of a richly varied and dramatic human existence and furnish the forms of worship it requires. But should the Church remain dismembered, broken into sectarian fragments which minister to merely private pieties, she will operate upon a contracting instead of an expanding scale. She worships vicariously as well as for herself, and desires correspondence with multitudes outside her pale, many of whom could be paganized almost as easily as they could be diverted from spiritualized symbolism. The stringent policies which have hitherto forbidden even a modified ceremonialism are being undermined by circumstances, and you may be certain that the descendants of men who once made religion the primal business of nascently democratic states will not be found wanting in the requisites which repeat that ancestral deed.

But there is another and a very important side to this question. For while we are or should be the straitest censors of ourselves, you are to remember that the shallow souls who

underestimate worship are not confined to Protestantism. Useless repetitions flourish unconcerned in other ecclesiastical households. Liturgical services intoned in beautiful and stately buildings do not of themselves induce the wicked to repent. Even a studied decorum is sometimes no more than a pretty mockery of genuine reverence, a superficial mannerism concealing the spirit's wanderings from God. The "dissidence of dissent," which Matthew Arnold satirized, had its peculiarities, but it was seldom discourteous to the indwelling Heavenly Guest. Furthermore, provided worship be reasonable, revelatory, reverent, its range is usually commensurate with the requirements of the congregation. Three concrete illustrations of this statement are fixed among the recollections of my student days. The first was a Salvation Army service conducted by Mrs. Catherine Booth, the foremost woman of the nineteenth century pulpit. Nothing could have been more appropriate than this gifted lady's coalescence with her audience. The thousands of neglected folk who hung upon her lips were as responsive as the polite congregations held spellbound by the sonorous tones of a national thanksgiving at St. Paul's Cathedral. I was impressed by the intense spirituality of the whole service. It was indeed worship of a true character, in which the love of ritual expressed itself through military uniforms suited to the tastes of those they were intended to attract, while a tuneful band led the singing. The proportion of praise, prayer and exhortation was well kept, and religious benefits were obtained which could not have been so fully secured by other methods. The second instance occurred in the West London Mission, then under the superintendency of the late Hugh Price Hughes, and located in the heart of a district which Hall Caine rightly named "the Devil's Acre." For an hour before Mr. Hughes appeared an orchestra rendered classical music to an audience consisting of every class, including not a few evidently dissipated, and the entire number representative of that part of mighty London. Presently the preacher came upon the platform, a man of first rate gifts and culture, and exceed-

ingly forcible as a great advocate of Christianity, intent on securing a favorable verdict from his hearers. He preached with ardor and fidelity, and I went away rejoicing that here was a minister who rose above even his high reputation. The orchestra was his agency for an artistic rendition of sacred themes; the sermon stood out from its surroundings like a tall tree in a forest; and as in the East End with Mrs. Booth so in the West End with Mr. Hughes there was a collaboration of worship with popular necessities. The third instance came still nearer to the sum of the best ideals of the sanctuary. The church was the Abbey of St. Peter in Westminster, and the preacher was Phillips Brooks. Sir Frederick Bridge was at the organ, the harmonies of Purcell and Mozart preceded the sermon, and the *Hallelujah Chorus* from Handel's *Messiah* followed it. I chanced to sit in Poets' Corner, hard by the grave of the composer, and when the congregation arose at the first strains of the incomparable choir and paid its homage to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords I could have touched Handel's tomb. The occasion, the place, the prayers, the anthems, the sight of America's noblest preacher in that venerable pulpit, and the message he delivered from it, were a harmonious unity obedient to the mandates that divine worship enjoins, making the service one of those holy memories which are an inspiration and a strength for after days.

I submit that these instances were indicative of the unifying force of worship. They had a practically identical religious effect without respect to persons, and a spiritual aristocracy of thought and feeling reigned alike in all. Rank, wealth, culture, position, or their utter absence, were absorbed by the desire for religious elevation. They were schools of Christ, in which three of His distinguished servants held their fellow men to His claims and aroused in them the faith which makes His disciples equal before their Maker, enabling them to honor all men; a scriptural precept few indeed have obeyed. Would that the materialistic views that pollute social propaganda by aiming to produce well-fed, comfortably-

housed, efficient animals rather than men and women alive unto God could be silenced, and the secularization of society halted by the worship which first sees all souls, however mean and unlovely, as the offspring and heirs of their Creator. For such worship is as surely one of the nurseries of social regeneration as it is the setting of a prophetic pulpit.

The Divine Spirit speaks in divers ways to men. His power pulsates in the Sistine Madonna, before which Crabb Robinson stood for hours and then exclaimed, "Now I believe in the Incarnation!" The Spirit taught the builders of the aisles of Lincoln and Salisbury their cunning, and His light shines through the storied windows of the Sainte-Chapelle at Paris and St. Gudulph's at Brussels. His harmonies are heard in the music of Bach and Beethoven; His thoughts are vocal in the lyrics of St. Bernard and the poetry of Browning. These, you will say, are the consummation of art, but are they not also tokens of the perfect life men long to find more fully? Yet it is a facile transition from pure worship to those pleasurable emotions awakened by beautiful symbolism, which do not sustain the soul of faith so much as they please the æsthetic sensibilities. You must not be pressed down beneath their weight, like mediæval knights in the tourney who were sometimes stifled by their gilded armor. I commend no rule at this point except that discrimination which regards the people you serve and then adapts methods of worship to their condition. But when the choice has to be made between embellishing worship with dignified ceremonialism and lowering it to suit the craving for crass vulgarity, it should not be difficult for you to decide. The priestless reticence of a Friends' Meeting House or the impressive severities of a Scotch Covenanting Kirk or the freedom of the Congregational order of devotion, which covers the difference between the liturgical services of the late Dr. Henry Allon and the conspicuous plainness of many New England churches, may be more to your liking than the venerable liturgies of the Book of Common Prayer and the rites and rubrics of Anglicanism. In these preferences you must follow your heart's lead, with-

out a doubt that there is room in all of them for the saving grace and wisdom of God.

II

American churches are not always well advised in their choice of constructive forms of worship. Our ministry is comparatively strong in courage, independence and other qualities natural to a young and singularly fortunate nation. But our very unconventionality occasionally tempts us to forsake traditions of demonstrated excellence for rash experiments. The clergymen of the older world are in constant contact with the wonders of historic Christianity. They know the actual scenes where prophets have "hurled tempestuous glories" from their thrones. They

> ". . . could not print
> Ground where the grass had yielded to the steps
> Of generations of illustrious men,
> Unmoved. They could not always lightly pass
> Through the same gateways, sleep where they had slept,
> Wake where they waked, range that enclosure old,
> That garden of great intellects, undisturbed."

Herein is the explanation of the good pulpit manners of the best British preachers. They respect the dignified procedure necessary to devotional gatherings, and impart to their ministrations that indefinable attraction of bearing which is to worship what the perfume is to the flower. Their representative divines are seldom heard without the consciousness that they deem the Church the apotheosis of society and the state but as the chief way in which humanity has grouped itself. Such subordination is foreign to our conception because this continent is measurably new, romantic, in process of becoming, with the fascination attending one of the last pioneer lands of Christendom. Probably Europe has much to teach us, but she is somewhat weary and disillusioned; and, though having much to learn, we are still vigorous and optimistic. No na-

tion, except Japan, has proved itself so plastic as ours to fresh impressions or readier in its reception of ideas hitherto strange.

We have recently seen with what hazard an eminence is attributed to the state which the ethical character of its politics does not justify, and not a few leaders are convinced that the Church must figure more largely in the national mind as the embodiment of supreme righteousness. But how is this to be brought about? Here again the state precedes us. It acclaims its heroes, parades its insignia, erects statues in prominent places and publicly recognizes brave actions and valuable services. Every man, woman and child participates in this "order of worship." The boy or girl follows the garlanded regiment with glee, the older people see in its march the fulfilment of their dreams. But their united tributes fade, while the greatness of the world's Redeemer forever remains. What has the Church done to proclaim Him not only by preaching, now so widely neglected, but in open ways that set aside mistaken privacy? Let us enthrone God in Christ in worship, not before His professed followers alone but before all peoples. It was a praiseworthy impulse that bade General Booth inscribe the heraldries of Christ on the flags converted outcasts carried through the streets. Secluded saints may recite their creeds and sing their hymns to their own satisfaction, but the prophetic instinct drives you to the countless throngs which depart from their highest good and compels you to believe that worship must be mobilized for their immediate benefit, and its individualistic tendencies overcome.

True worship involves no lapses into infantile stages of credulity. It is best secured by the eclectic preferences which call no forms unclean at the behest of prejudice, and are bent on uniting the best in old and new symbolisms for its expression. The spiritual gravity, delicacy of feeling and devout behavior of men given to prayer are just as essential to an open-air gathering as to a cathedral audience. Make these virtues your own; they check self-sufficiency and blatant rhetoric and bestow dignity and value on every office of worship.

It is possible for a preacher to be conversant with the Scriptures, to have a great love for them, and yet to be without the faith that conquers the world. It is also possible for congregations merely to admire what is holy because they would regard it as monstrous not to revere sacred truth. But they must advance beyond these primary stages and conceive that true worship which is of the heart. The church of whispered colloquies, belated notices, sermon-lectures and theatrical compromises can be transformed into the dwelling-place of the living God by prayer and worship. Then the people who gather there will eat the heavenly manna and live and cause others to live. The signs of this transformation are not found in comments on the sermon or the anthem, but in the exclamation, "Lo God is here! let us adore! And own how dreadful is the place."

You do not have to attempt a philosophy of prayer as the transcendent agency in worship, the source and completion of its devotion. Assume its merits, put them to the test; then you will escape the world of sense and the machineries of ritual. Practice pastoral supplication not in the unfaith disguised as simple submission to the inevitable, but in the radiant strength and confidence created by the promises of Christ. Those promises dismiss the inventions which divide Time and Eternity and usher you into a personal intimacy, the speech of which is not that of logic but of love. It is a turning point in your life when you are made the priest of the people through your freedom of access to the Mercy Seat. Your petitions may always have been sincere, but they have to become ministerial, to move other hearts to pray, to dismiss from them the extenuations of self-love, to recall to confession their faults and transgressions, to instill in the bowed and contrite audience the consciousness of Divine forgiveness and illumination. Were this profound process modified, how unwholesome pastoral prayer would be, how productive of the unreality which finally degenerates into hypocrisy! It is the helplessness of the creature that drives him to supplication, his knowledge of infirmities of temper and will, which it is a vain labor

to try to cure. Through you he lays hold on the faith which assures him that if any man sin he has an Advocate with the Father, and that those who come to that Advocate He will in no wise cast out. These spiritual apprehensions and satisfactions arise like incense from the congregations to which you minister. Their travail from death unto life is always before you, and the requests with thanksgiving which you make known unto God for them are a universal experience in the Church. Yet there as elsewhere are men and women who crave a religion that addresses the senses and bids for temporal prosperity. The outward forms of the household of faith are more grateful to them than its inmost life and teaching. The golden calf was erected under the Mount of the law by rebellious Hebrews because they demanded gods that could be seen and that would go before them, condoning their folly and their pride. Nevertheless men and women who are of the world conceal in their hearts some ideals of truth, beauty and a Divine Being. They have felt the Spirit of love breathing within them, the Spirit Who fills them with the desire to live for Him. Pray therefore without ceasing and inspire others thus to pray; this is fundamental.

Beware of deflections from fellowship with Heaven which corrupt public uses of prayer. Draw near to the Giver of every good and perfect gift in the faith that must be answered because of your personal acceptance of the Divine Will, in the filial confidence our Lord Himself displayed, in the assurance that the Father is all-powerful to do, all-wise to know, all-loving to give; in brief, in the Name that is above every name, believing that for every difficulty sin and injustice have created, for every request regenerated manhood makes, there is full and sufficient provision. Let your prayers reproduce Christ's revelation of God as the perfect embodiment of beneficence and law. Then specific and general prayer will do much to solve the problems of your ministry and quicken its devotional character.

The public prayer that best articulates worship is more largely a gift than is ordinarily suspected. Men who are

not remarkable in prophecy excel in priesthood, while others who are notable as preachers always find it an effort to pray. Of course all men can and ought to pray, and the Old Testament regards prayer as an instinctive act, yet one of the arguments for a liturgy is the dearth of spontaneity in prayer. When it is forced and embarrassed, it is a grave hindrance to Divine intercourse upon the part of the people; and there should be no irremovable objection to the use of a liturgy patterned, for example, after the peerless model of the Anglican Church. It would seem as though God had given to some of His ambassadors special powers of entreaty as distinct as the sense of color in Rembrandt or of tremulous light and shade in Ruysdael. Apply yourselves to the cultivation of these powers so far as this is possible, and should they prove reluctant resort to the best books of devotion to refresh them. Do not read your own prayers if you can possibly avoid it, nor include in them private requests unless these can be presented with due reticence. Variation in prayer is as desirable as it is in preaching, and its benefit reveals itself more fully in those petitions which indicate definite preparation. Sterile minds fly to cant phrases, and bestrew their supplications with reiterations, effeminacies and saccharine endearments which are offensive. Keep before you the repetitions you must use as resting places for the mind of prayer, and let every solicitation be moulded by those great examples which are found in the Gospels and the Epistles of St. Paul. A rich vocabulary without the suspicion of affectation or profuseness but dynamic and appropriate; the touch of imagination that rejects trite terms and puts the intrinsic truth they contain in more suitable forms; the study of such masters of prayer as Joseph Parker, George Matheson and Henry Ward Beecher, are suggestive methods for your ministry of prayer. Keep at hand the meditations of men of a deeply devotional habit and try to make more worthy what you offer to God by their superior thoughts and words. Such men are authoritative upon prayer, in which they take delight, working themselves out, as it were, in its

various phases, and entirely absorbed in Him Who works through them. They show the high reality of the priestly office and the difference between its mere shell and its spiritual substance. Assemblies in which they minister are likely to be means of present blessing and cherished religious memories. Yet speaking for myself I confess that after I have consulted these saintly authors it is the consciousness of my own relation to the diversified needs of a congregation of souls that drives me to a further preparation befitting one who must stand between them and the Eternal Father. They coöperate in the contacts of worship to obtain direct religious relief and inspiration. Whether viewed subjectively as the rule of their inner life or objectively in respect to its credenda, worship is at once the consummation of their social impulse and your amplest opportunity for communicating its sanctification. It should be admonitory, solemn, comforting, joyous, enthusiastic, and chastened by godly fear. These qualities are due to prayer, which is not only work, but work in its supreme meanings, carrying toward their perfection the noblest ends of human being. That you should pray aright as a pastor, it is essential for you to know intimately those for whom you pray. Consider their different circumstances, aspirations and implicit trust; learn how to translate into warm and tender petitions the sacred convictions and sentiments of your flock. Still the tumult of their souls by the suffusion of a quiet confidence. Pour out your sympathetic self when you thus pray for and with others, because, as a rule, they do not express themselves freely. On the contrary, they often find it exceedingly difficult to indicate what they most desire, and your utterance must be the speech of their inmost selves. In every audience thus engaged there is a microcosm of humanity, of its sins and backslidings, penitences and confessions, cravings for pardon and reconciliation and its anticipation of a blissful immortality. Side by side are the devotees of this world and the next, vanity's parade and the chaste loveliness of spiritual intercourse. To abolish this contradiction and thereby increase the spirit of worship

in your congregation it is imperative that you yourself shall possess the open vision, the sure word, the steady glow of vital piety. As the moon, which shines not by its own light but by that of the sun, moves all the slumbering oceans of the planet, so Christ's true priests who gain audience with the Divine in public prayer obtain what St. Clement of Alexandria called "mutual and reciprocal correspondence" with God, and thereby set in motion the filial activities of His children.

III

In the sanctuary praise encircles prayer with a golden halo. Its "psalms, hymns and spiritual songs" are the native language of the Faith. The foundations of Israel's prophetic freedom and of the Church of the New Covenant were laid amid the hymnings of the first singers who recorded the victories of God's providence and grace in their lyrics. It is not an exaggeration to say that Christianity owes the preservation of its life, the purity of its belief and the persistence of its mission, in a large measure, to the matchless anthems which have heralded its course down the ages. "True singing," as Carlyle said, "is of the nature of worship, whereof such singing is but the record and melodious representation to us." It would be strange if a religion which calls upon its adherents to "rejoice evermore and in everything to give thanks" did not afford the fullest range for suitable praise, nor reckon upon its moulding influence in human character. It regulates the affections in delightful ways, composes and cheers the soul, banishes levity and boisterousness and fills the mind with serene and lofty conceptions of sacred realities. The regenerated heart and the conscience void of offense will always be the theaters of praise, and will evince their gratitude and contentment to the outside world. One can mark the processes of Christian development whether in the believer or the Church at large by the psalms and lyrics which have swayed the souls of the nations and which signified the firm and intelligent hold of entire communities and

peoples upon standard truths and doctrines. The cementing strength of union and fortitude among persecuted households, downtrodden tribes and oppressed sects is to be found in their religious stanzas set to appropriate melodies. In these, as in nothing else, the triumphs of God's deliverances are celebrated. They echoed on the shores of the Red Sea, in the catacombs of Rome, the recesses of Eastern desert hermitages, the fastnesses of Alpine mountains, the glens of covenanting Scotland, the forests that skirted Plymouth Bay, and the camp-meetings of early Methodism. The passional forces which found a profitable outlet in Christian praise have augmented its worship-values beyond all knowledge. The range of that praise covers the Hebrew Psalter, the matchless hymns of the Gospel of the Nativity and the chosen lyrics of evangelical history. Arius, though an acute disputant, did not rely upon his logic alone for the spread of his ideas, but wrote songs for sailors, plowmen and pilgrims. St. Chrysostom cultivated psalmody in the Church at Constantinople to controvert Arian heresies, and St. Augustine composed an elaborate hymn to fortify his people against the Donatists. The mediævalists, monks, friars, students and wayfarers included, took to the highways in singing bands, and all the fasts and festivals of the Church of the Middle Ages were accompanied by appropriate chantings. The Lollards propagated their teachings by popular melodies; Luther's *Ein' Feste Burg* was the battle hymn of the new Republic established in free grace for all mankind. Since then what these widely separated brethren, who were nevertheless in many essentials one, expressed in their praise has girdled the globe.

It is asserted that half a million hymns, to say nothing of kindred poems, or of anthems and oratorios, are the vehicles of praise in the modern Church. As such they are almost entirely free from the controversial spirit that harasses doctrinal statements, and yet nothing is so confident as hymnology in its assumptions or in its invocation of the Eternal. Stormy seas of theological and ecclesiastical differences which too few care to cross separate the various territories of the

Christian brotherhood. But praise pacifies their rage; Roman Catholic and Protestant unconsciously unite in those lyrical ascriptions which make their Sabbath keeping a common experience. Actual contact with the unseen, upon which everything in worship depends, is here unhampered by doctrinal quarrels, and strikes the believing soul with the impact of a fresh discovery. The solemn shadow of the cross which is the very glory of religious radiance, the spirit that sentinels the breast expectant of the Lord's approach; the trials and the patience of a nation's or an individual's faith; the triumph of the Kingdom of God, are alike within the compass of the hymns of the Church. They afford the surest evidence that one life runs through every branch of the Vine and that every believing spirit belongs to an all comprehensive fellowship. Such communion with God rises above images, latinities, material presences in bread and wine, liturgical arrangements, historic episcopates and valid ordinations, like the eagle of the sky above the growths of the plain. The well-known stanzas of "Jesus, Lover of my soul," which tell of the mediatorship of Christ; of "Praise to the Holiest in the heights," which laud the Incarnate Saviour; "of "O God, our help in ages past," which ascribe providential supremacy to Jehovah; of "The God of Abraham praise," filled as they are with majestic Theism, put the whole matter to proof. In them the Being and the Incarnation of the Everlasting One are more vividly portrayed than in the prose of the most competent Christian thinkers. Sacred lyrics of the highest order give to worship catholicity, spontaneity, access and conscious acceptance. Where they are sung the dreariest lot is transformed; night is turned into day, the patience of hope and the labor of love are reënfranchised.

In their arrangement of the order of worship some ministers act on the principle that it should be a unity. Their hymns, lessons and prayers are subordinated to the sermon and emphasize the same message and have the same tone. I agree with Dr. Dale that it is wiser to impart variety to worship. Thereby you appeal to variant moods and quicken

the interest of the congregation in what it is about. How often a magnificent hymn or anthem has redeemed the inadequacy of other acts of worship. Let the Lord's Day morning hour ring with salutations to the God Whose goodness is an unfathomed sea; its evening shadows be illumined by hymns which bespeak the companionship of the Christ Who journeyed to Emmaus, and the intervening moments of praise proclaim in divers tones the heavenly themes which awake the heart. "All poetry," said Browning in a letter to Ruskin, "is the problem of putting the infinite into the finite." Give hymns a wide opening for their rich profusion, and they will solve the problem of which Browning spoke. Reflect, however, that if you would find sustenance for acceptable worship, the best hymns, and those alone, must be appropriated. Be fastidious at this point, for Protestantism in its more primitive forms is deluged with doggerel that often does not even rime. Offer nothing to Heaven's holiness except the choicest harmonies that earth can produce. An educational campaign for the rescue of worship from the ineptitude and irreverence inflicted upon it by vitiated taste has long been overdue. You will be fortunate if you receive the help of a music committee which knows something about the rudiments of music, and of a choirmaster who upraises the whole service by the healthy stimulus he imparts to it. Dr. Harry Rowe Shelley ministers to audiences in the church I serve not only because of his notable gifts as an organist and a composer, but because he thoroughly appreciates the proper subordination of the choir to congregational worship. Zundel did the same thing for Beecher, and Dudley Buck, one of the fathers of sacred music in America, knew how to utilize to the full of the resources of his great profession. The end of worship is to realize the communion of saints by making all its acts the prophecy of that communion uttered in a universal speech. The average Protestant service is too much monopolized by the minister, and a great deal of it could be handed over to the congregation with salutary effect. Psalms to repeat and canticles to chant, confessions and thanksgivings to say in

unison, or antiphonal and responsive selections, dismiss indifference in the House of God and give a personal interest to worship.

You should reserve the public reading of the appointed lessons to yourself and take pains to read them in an acceptable manner. Why has this most important part of worship had to contend with almost insuperable difficulties? The Bible is written in the noblest English extant; it concerns subjects of universal and undying interest; it is endeared to every listener by tradition and recollection, and yet the evidence proves that it is seldom read aloud as George Osborn could read it, or Dean Welldon of Manchester reads it to-day. There is an extraordinary scope in the Scriptures for every kind of admissible elocution; they resemble in breadth and dignity a Beethoven symphony. The task of the musician is to interpret that symphony fully; the task of the minister is to do likewise for the Bible. But as a rule, with many and marked exceptions, the clerical reader runs through his work in a mechanical uninterested way, with muffled articulation, a dull monotone or misplaced emphasis. Study the lessons beforehand, make every passage convey its own meaning, and you will be recognized as a welcome medium for their transmission.

In conclusion, be assured that the Church of God is all that she claims to be and infinitely more, and that the same holds true of her prophecy, priesthood and worship. Her visible life, from the lowly meeting house of the rustic lane to the "great, ghostly, darkling domes" of the cathedral and everything they house and celebrate—what is it but the praise of the All-Holy One, the praise which will be vocal when sectarian dissensions are not regarded even as curiosities? See in the material forms of stately or humble churches the consecration devout men made of themselves and their substance because of their thankfulness for the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. Go to Nature for her corroboration of the reasonableness, the revelation, the reverence of worship. Accustom yourselves to her benevolent aspects. Like humanity Nature

has cruelties and tyrannies, but also benign features and noble ministries before which our dissonances shrink abashed. She has inspired the predictions of prophets, and disturbed with sacred joy the thoughts of poets, artists, musicians, who, as we have seen, are the coadjutors of Heaven's ambassadors. The significance of mountain solitudes, those stainless altars of the race; the silence of a sleeping wood where primeval peoples first knelt to pray; the moving waters of the seas,

> ". . . at their priestlike task
> Of pure ablution round Earth's human shores,"

make specific contributions to your equipment as a leader of worship. They teach you, as they taught the men of olden time, that the invisible things of Him Whom you represent "are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and Divinity."[2] Subjected to the lawful rule of faith, they no longer intimidate you. Spiritual imagination finds in them a leveling of distinctions, while at the same time they elevate the whole family in heaven and earth to a new height in which all are one.

You may ask what Angel of the Presence is sufficient for the task imposed upon you as a guide to those who worship the King Eternal. But you can be something more than angels for the purpose: you can be men in the strength and after the pattern of Him Who passed by the nature of angels that "He might lay hold on the seed of Abraham." And your manhood as a Christian preacher can follow two types,—the one which is always trying with might and main to be good, according to approved ordinances; the other, doing the right without overstrain or fear, because the Spirit of God is with you as He was with the Master. The latter type is, in my judgment, the best agent of religious reconstruction. In it the prophet and the priest, the sermon and the worship, are conjoined. Open-minded and charitable, it proclaims Christ from the steps of the altar and finds the tokens of His Pres-

[2] Romans i: 20.

ence in the devout theism of the Jew, the loyalty of the Roman Catholic, the inner light of the Friend, the independence of the Puritan, the zeal of the Evangelical and the research of the Christian scholar. All these things contribute to worship in their several degrees; bringing their homage and praise to the Eternal Christ, and where He is there is the Church.

In its truest essence worship inspires the soul to offer all its activities to God, and for this conscious self-surrender He has made special demands and created special provisions. He permitted each past generation to honor Him according to its strength, and gradually transformed and raised the ideals of the nations, making use even of inferior and fleeting ideals in His government of mankind. To worship the Lord in the beauty of that holiness which the Scriptures enjoin and through the mediatorship of the Divine Christ is the sacred privilege of the Christian Church and the only homage worthy of believers. The men and women of Puritan descent in whom the strains of individualism and independency run deeply will hardly consent to march beneath banners out of which the colors of their conviction have been washed. Contrite, confessional, recipient, enriched, their alternations between self-abasement and holy exaltation invoke the assistance of the emotions rather than the senses, and not infrequently a profound and reasoned belief lies behind their emotions. They contend, with truth, that whatever external things are at the disposal of worship, its development depends upon the internal reign of the Spirit of God in the spirits of men. Few will dispute the contention or deny that the subtle telepathies of communion are hindered by ceremonies which drag it to the lower levels of formalism. Nevertheless you are justified in enlisting the instrumentalities which ensphere public devotion with a sacred aura. Behind the New Testament is the community of believers giving to God that ascription, praise and honor which not even the greatest of saints can render by himself; and behind the community of believers is the

Everlasting Father of mankind, Who will not allow you to be disappointed in your approach to Him, because He has chosen you to do His own work in the world.

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